

**ANTISENSE MODULATION OF MHC CLASS II TRANSACTIVATOR
EXPRESSION**

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides compositions and methods for modulating the expression of MHC class II transactivator. In particular, this invention relates to compounds, particularly oligonucleotides, specifically hybridizable with nucleic acids encoding MHC class II transactivator. Such compounds have been shown to modulate the expression of MHC class II transactivator.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

As the predominant presenters of exogenous antigens to helper T cells, major histocompatibility complex class II (MHCII) molecules are heterodimeric transmembrane glycoproteins found constitutively on professional antigen-presenting cell types such as dendritic cells, B cells, activated T cells, cells of the monocyte/macrophage lineage, and epithelial cells in the thymus. Endothelial cells can also be induced to express high levels of MHCII by stimulation with the proinflammatory cytokine interferon-gamma (IFN- γ), and a variety of stimuli such as growth factors, IFN- β , interleukin-1 (IL-1), certain drugs, or infection by a variety of bacterial and viral pathogens, can modulate this IFN- γ -mediated induction of MHCII expression in non-bone-marrow derived cell types that do not constitutively express MHCII. In humans, a congenital lack of both constitutive and inducible MHCII results in a profound and

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generally fatal immunodeficiency, type II bare lymphocyte syndrome (BLS), marked by a significant reduction of CD4+ T cells. MHCII gene expression is precisely regulated and plays a pivotal role in control of the immune response, including T-cell selection, tolerance induction, antibody production, T-cell-mediated immunity, and the inflammatory response. Thus, a lack of or decrease in MHCII gene expression can prove advantageous to invading pathogens. Conversely, overexpression of MHCII has been implicated as a contributing factor in numerous inflammatory processes and autoimmune diseases such as transplant rejection, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, and multiple sclerosis (Harton and Ting, *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2000**, *20*, 6185-6194; Reith and Mach, *Annu. Rev. Immunol.*, **2001**, *19*, 331-373).

Investigations into the cause of a hereditary form of severe combined immunodeficiency disease (SCID) known as HLA class II-deficient combined immunodeficiency (or BLS complementation group A) revealed that the genes encoding MHCII molecules were not defective. Instead, BLS is a disease of MHCII gene regulation; mutations have been found in the transcription factor controlling MHCII gene expression, MHC class II transactivator (also known as type II bare lymphocyte syndrome-associated factor, MHC2TA, CIITA and C2TA) (Bontron et al., *Hum. Genet.*, **1997**, *99*, 541-546; Steimle et al., *Cell*, **1993**, *75*, 135-146). MHC class II transactivator was identified by an expression cloning approach in which the RJ2.25 MHCII-negative mutant cell line, derived from the HLA class II-positive Burkitt lymphoma B cell line Raji, was transfected with cDNA libraries in expression vectors and selected for restoration of the wild-type phenotype. MHC class II transactivator also fully corrected the MHCII regulatory defect of cells from three patients with BLS (Steimle et al., *Cell*, **1993**, *75*, 135-146).

MHC class II transactivator is regarded as the master regulator of both constitutive and inducible MHCII gene

expression. MHC class II transactivator may act in a coactivator-like fashion through protein-protein interactions by contacting factors that bind to MHCII promoter elements, or to components of the transcriptional machinery, or both.

5 Alternatively, MHC class II transactivator may activate HLA class II transcription by modifying proteins that bind to the promoter. MHC class II transactivator is a nuclear protein that activates three genes important for antigen processing and presentation by MHCII. The first gene is MHCII itself, 10 and the other two, the Ii and H-2M genes, are important for loading peptide into the antigen-binding groove of MHCII (Harton and Ting, *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2000**, *20*, 6185-6194; Kielar et al., *Inflammation*, **2000**, *24*, 431-445; Reith and Mach, *Annu. Rev. Immunol.*, **2001**, *19*, 331-373).

15 Interactions between MHC class II transactivator and sequence-specific DNA-binding proteins are required for MHC class II transactivator to activate MHCII genes, and the domains required for activating transcription, for mediating associations of MHC class II transactivator with other 20 proteins as well as domains influencing its subcellular localization have been mapped. MHC class II transactivator interacts with the coactivator CBP(p300), leading to the synergistic activation of MHCII promoters. It was also observed that MHC class II transactivator forms complexes 25 with itself, and this self-association is a requirement for MHCII promoter activation (Sisk et al., *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2001**, *21*, 4919-4928). Independently, Linhoff, et al., defined the peptide domains responsible for heterotypic and homotypic associations within the MHC class II transactivator protein. 30 MHC class II transactivator was noted to have a complex pattern of self-associations, as well as an arrangement of domains similar to that of two apoptosis signaling proteins, Apaf-1 and Nod1, which also self-associate (Linhoff et al., *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2001**, *21*, 3001-3011)

35 In its role as a non-DNA-binding transcriptional coactivator, MHC class II transactivator acts as a scaffold

1 molecule in a macromolecular complex that allows
transcription factors to interact with the MHCII promoter in
a spatially and helically constrained fashion. The MHCII
promoter has three conserved DNA elements, called W, X, and
Y, which are critical for promoter function, and regulation
5 of the MHCII promoter requires strict spatial-helical
arrangements of promoter elements X and Y. The X element
binds to the trimeric transcription factor, RFX and to the
DNA-binding factor CREB (cyclic-AMP response element binding
10 protein), while the Y element binds NF-Y/CBP, another
trimeric DNA-binding factor that plays a critical role in
chromatin modulation. None of these three factors alone are
sufficient for the induction of the MHCII promoter, but MHC
class II transactivator binds to all three of these factors
15 and appears to stabilize a RFX-CREB-NF-Y/CBF complex at the
MHCII promoter allowing activation of transcription (Zhu et
al., *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2000**, *20*, 6051-6061).

The MHC class II transactivator protein contains motifs
similar to GTP-binding proteins and has been shown to bind
20 GTP. Mutations in these motifs decrease both GTP-binding and
transactivation activity. MHC class II transactivator lacks
GTPase activity, suggesting that it is a constitutively
active GTP-binding protein. MHC class II transactivator
resides predominantly in the nucleus and its nuclear import
25 is facilitated by GTP-binding (Harton et al., *Science*, **1999**,
285, 1402-1405). Further examination of the nuclear
localization signal (NLS) within the MHC class II
transactivator protein as well as mutant forms of the protein
revealed an additional NLS as well as a nuclear export signal
30 (NES), indicating that localization of the protein depends on
a balance of import and export. Interestingly, one BLS
complementation group A patient has a deletion in a NLS
region of MHC class II transactivator, abrogating
transactivational activity due to failure of the protein to
35 translocate from the cytoplasm to the nucleus. Thus, control
of nuclear import and export of the MHC class II

transactivator protein may play a role in regulation of its function (Cressman et al., *J. Immunol.*, **2001**, *167*, 3626-3634).

Recently, MHC class II transactivator was demonstrated to have an intrinsic acetyltransferase activity that is stimulated by GTP and is regulated by the GTP-binding domain. Transactivation by MHC class II transactivator depends on this acetyltransferase activity, and the extent and pattern of acetylation at the promoters of MHCII genes may be dynamically modulated by MHC class II transactivator (Raval et al., *Mol. Cell.*, **2001**, *7*, 105-115).

A variety of stimuli, including lipopolysaccharide (LPS), IFN- α , tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α), CD40 ligand, bacterial and viral infection and the induction of experimental autoimmune encephalitis, trigger the maturation of dendritic cells (DCs), marked by an increase in cell surface expression of MHCII molecules, enhancing their ability to present antigen and activate naïve CD4+ T cells. In contrast to this increased surface expression of MHCII protein on DCs, the de novo biosynthesis of MHCII is turned off. A remarkably rapid reduction in the abundance of MHC class II transactivator mRNA and protein is the result of the transcriptional inactivation of two promoters of the MHC class II transactivator gene. The fact that the two promoters are situated far apart from each other implies a global silencing mechanism affecting a large region of the gene, and histones have been shown to be deacetylated along the entire regulatory region of the MHC class II transactivator gene during DC maturation (Landmann et al., *J. Exp. Med.*, **2001**, *194*, 379-391).

Knockout mice bearing a deletion in the region of the MHC class II transactivator gene encoding the GTP-binding domain have been generated. MHCII expression is nearly eliminated in these mice except for low levels of mRNA detected in spleen, lymph node, and thymus, suggestive of the presence of MHC class II transactivator-independent

regulation of MHCII expression. No induction of MHCII gene expression by IL-4, LPS or IFN- γ was observed in these mice (Itoh-Lindstrom et al., *J. Immunol.*, **1999**, *163*, 2425-2431). Knockout mice lacking promoter IV of the three independent promoter elements in the MHC class II transactivator gene regulatory region have also been generated. These mice exhibit selective abrogation of IFN- γ -induced MHCII expression on a wide variety of non-bone marrow-derived cells, although constitutive expression of MHCII expression is unaffected on professional antigen presenting cells. Thus, these mice demonstrate differential MHC class II transactivator promoter usage (Waldburger et al., *J. Exp. Med.*, **2001**, *194*, 393-406).

Activity of the MHC class II transactivator protein is regulated by posttranslational modification. Prostaglandins, immune modulators that induce protein kinase A (PKA), inhibit IFN- γ -mediated induction of MHCII genes, and this was found to be due to an inhibitory phosphorylation on serine 834 and 1050 of MHC class II transactivator by PKA (Li et al., *Mol. Cell. Biol.*, **2001**, *21*, 4626-4635).

Malignant cells have several mechanisms of evading immune recognition. One common defect in the recognition and killing of tumor cells by lymphocytes is the lack of a costimulatory signal, such as is normally provided by the CD80 and CD86 costimulatory molecules. Another means of tumor cell evasion of immune recognition and destruction is via down-regulation of MHC class I and class II genes, resulting in a lack of T lymphocyte surveillance of potential tumor antigens. MHC class II transactivator is an excellent candidate for an inducer of an immune response to cancer not only because it is a global regulator of MHCII gene expression, but also because it can induce significant amounts of MHC class I in cells with low or no class I expression, allowing further enhancement of T cell surveillance. In a Line 1 lung carcinoma model, low levels of MHC class II transactivator expression were found to be mildly effective in decreasing tumor growth rate; however, at

higher levels MHC class II transactivator actually increased tumor growth. Furthermore, in contrast to expectations, cells coexpressing both CD86 and MHC class II transactivator genes failed to have a cooperative immune protection from tumor growth or to act as a cancer vaccine. MHC class II transactivator actually enhanced tumor immunity by reducing the protection by costimulatory molecule CD86 alone, and thus, MHC class II transactivator may play a negative role in gene therapy attempts to control lung tumor growth (Martin et al., *J. Immunol.*, 1999, 162, 6663-6670). Thus there is a strong need for additional cancer therapy agents that can regulate the expression and function of MHC class II transactivator.

To date, investigative strategies aimed at modulating MHC class II transactivator function have involved the use of deletion mutants, an antisense expression vector and natural and synthetic inhibitors.

Disclosed and claimed in US Patent 5,672,473 is a substantially pure DNA encoding a MHC class II transactivator polypeptide and a method of determining whether a compound inhibits the ability of a polypeptide to activate transcription, the polypeptide being characterized in that it comprises the MHC class II transactivator transcription activation domain and lacks a functional interaction domain, wherein inhibition of transcription indicates that said compound is a potential autoimmune disease therapeutic (Glimcher et al., 1997).

Disclosed and claimed in PCT Publication WO 98/15626 are nucleic acid and polypeptides molecules that comprise the amino acid sequence of a MHC class II transactivator protein, wherein amino acid residues are missing from the N-terminus or the acidic transcriptional activation domain, such that the resulting polypeptide reduces the expression of MHC class II antigens. Further claimed are a ribozyme that is targeted at bases 1159-1161 (nucleotides GUA) of the human MHC class II transactivator mRNA or at the corresponding target in

another species, expression vectors, transgenic animals and cells, nucleic acid molecules that hybridize selectively to the MHC class II transactivator gene, a method of gene therapy for reducing the expression of MHC class II antigens and a pharmaceutical composition which comprises said nucleic molecules in a suitable form for use in gene therapy (Fabre et al., 1998).

Disclosed and claimed in US Patent 5,994,505 and PCT Publication WO 98/25968 are mutant class II transactivator proteins, not naturally occurring, selected from the group consisting of said proteins containing at least one amino acid deletion, an antibody which specifically binds to said protein, an isolated DNA encoding a mutant class II transactivator protein, recombinant expression vectors and host cells, a method of inhibiting hyperexpression of class II major histocompatibility complex (MHC) molecules in a subject in need of such treatment, comprising administering a recombinant DNA such that the mutant class II transactivator protein encoded by said DNA is expressed in vivo, in an amount effective to downregulate expression of class II major histocompatibility complex (MHC) molecules (Ting and Chin, 1999; Ting and Chin, 1998).

Disclosed and claimed in US Patent 6,022,741 is an isolated DNA sequence comprising a MHC class II transactivator regulatory element, a DNA that hybridizes to said sequence, wherein said regulatory element activates or suppresses transcription of the MHC class II transactivator gene, recombinant DNA expression vectors, and host cells. Also generally disclosed are antisense oligonucleotides (Ting and Piskurich, 2000).

The MHC class II transactivator cDNA was cloned in the antisense orientation in an expression vector and expression of MHC class II transactivator antisense RNA in wild type B cells was shown to reduce the IFN- γ -induced surface expression of MHCII molecules (Chin et al., *Immunity*, 1994, 1, 687-697).

Disclosed and claimed in US Patent 5,994,082 and

European Patent EP 0874049 is a method for identifying a molecule as an inhibitor which suppresses the activity of a protein displaying MHC class II transactivator activity, a nucleic acid sequence comprising all or part of the MHC class II transactivator gene sequence, a nucleic acid sequence that hybridises to the promoter region of said sequence and blocks its promoter activity, a nucleic acid sequence comprising the promoter region of said sequence with at least one mutation that affects the promoter activity of the sequence, a nucleic acid sequence that hybridizes to the coding region of said sequence and blocks synthesis of the encoded polypeptide, a cloning or expression vector containing said sequence, a cell transformed with said vectors, a process for producing MHC class II transactivator polypeptide and recovering the polypeptide, a molecule capable of inhibiting the activity of said polypeptide, an antibody directed against said polypeptide, a nucleic acid sequence comprising the coding region of said sequence with at least one mutation that affects the function or expression of MHC class II transactivator, a method for diagnosis of predisposition to a disease associated with a disorder in the expression of genes coding for MHC class II molecules that affects the function or expression of a MHC class II transactivator (Mach, 1999; Mach, 1998).

Inhibitors of MHC class II transactivator have been reported in the art, including natural and synthetic compounds which inhibit the expression of MHC class II transactivator mRNA. The naturally occurring molecule nitric oxide (NO) was found to inhibit IFN- γ -induced expression of MHC class II transactivator mRNA by more than 50% (Kielar et al., *Inflammation*, 2000, 24, 431-445). Another agent which inhibits the function of MHC class II transactivator is cyclosporine. Cyclosporine is currently given to recipients of vascular xenografts as part of the immunosuppressive regimen required to prevent rejection. TNF- α -mediated induction of MHCII expression on porcine aortic endothelial

cells was completely inhibited by cyclosporine, and the reduction in MHCII mRNA was associated with a lack of MHC class II transactivator expression. It was concluded that cyclosporine either alters transcription or promotes rapid decay of MHC class II transactivator mRNA (Charreau et al., *Transplantation*, 2000, 70, 354-361). Simvastatin, a small molecule known to inhibit HMG-CoA reductase, has been used clinically as a lipid-lowering therapy for the prevention of coronary heart disease. Simvastatin was recently found to inhibit IFN-gamma induced expression of MHC class II transactivator expression in human vascular endothelial cells. Thus, the beneficial effects of statins reported after heart transplantation may result in an immunosuppressive action via inhibition of MHC class II transactivator (Kwak et al., *Swiss Med. Wkly.*, 2001, 131, 41-46).

It should be noted, however, that the mechanisms by which the aforementioned compounds inhibit MHC class II transactivator expression are not well understood, and these inhibitors may actually only indirectly inhibit MHC class II transactivator function by modulating the activity of other factors.

Modulation of expression of MHC class II transactivator is an ideal approach for controlling the immune response in autoimmune diseases, cancer, or for reducing the likelihood of allograft rejection or coronary artery disease after heart transplantation.

Consequently, there remains a long-felt need for therapeutic agents capable of effectively and specifically inhibiting MHC class II transactivator synthesis and function.

Antisense technology is emerging as an effective means for reducing the expression of specific gene products and may therefore prove to be uniquely useful in a number of therapeutic, diagnostic, and research applications for the modulation of MHC class II transactivator expression.

The present invention provides compositions and methods for modulating MHC class II transactivator expression including modulation of variants of MHC class II transactivator.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to compounds, particularly antisense oligonucleotides, which are targeted to a nucleic acid encoding MHC class II transactivator, and which modulate the expression of MHC class II transactivator. Pharmaceutical and other compositions comprising the compounds of the invention are also provided. Further provided are methods of modulating the expression of MHC class II transactivator in cells or tissues comprising contacting said cells or tissues with one or more of the antisense compounds or compositions of the invention. Further provided are methods of treating an animal, particularly a human, suspected of having or being prone to a disease or condition associated with expression of MHC class II transactivator by administering a therapeutically or prophylactically effective amount of one or more of the antisense compounds or compositions of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention employs oligomeric compounds, particularly antisense oligonucleotides, for use in modulating the function of nucleic acid molecules encoding MHC class II transactivator, ultimately modulating the amount of MHC class II transactivator produced. This is accomplished by providing antisense compounds which specifically hybridize with one or more nucleic acids encoding MHC class II transactivator. As used herein, the terms "target nucleic acid" and "nucleic acid encoding MHC class II transactivator" encompass DNA encoding MHC class II transactivator, RNA (including pre-mRNA and mRNA) transcribed from such DNA, and also cDNA derived from such RNA. The

specific hybridization of an oligomeric compound with its target nucleic acid interferes with the normal function of the nucleic acid. This modulation of function of a target nucleic acid by compounds which specifically hybridize to it is generally referred to as "antisense". The functions of DNA to be interfered with include replication and transcription. The functions of RNA to be interfered with include all vital functions such as, for example, translocation of the RNA to the site of protein translation, translation of protein from the RNA, splicing of the RNA to yield one or more mRNA species, and catalytic activity which may be engaged in or facilitated by the RNA. The overall effect of such interference with target nucleic acid function is modulation of the expression of MHC class II transactivator. In the context of the present invention, "modulation" means either an increase (stimulation) or a decrease (inhibition) in the expression of a gene. In the context of the present invention, inhibition is the preferred form of modulation of gene expression and mRNA is a preferred target.

It is preferred to target specific nucleic acids for antisense. "Targeting" an antisense compound to a particular nucleic acid, in the context of this invention, is a multistep process. The process usually begins with the identification of a nucleic acid sequence whose function is to be modulated. This may be, for example, a cellular gene (or mRNA transcribed from the gene) whose expression is associated with a particular disorder or disease state, or a nucleic acid molecule from an infectious agent. In the present invention, the target is a nucleic acid molecule encoding MHC class II transactivator. The targeting process also includes determination of a site or sites within this gene for the antisense interaction to occur such that the desired effect, e.g., detection or modulation of expression of the protein, will result. Within the context of the present invention, a preferred intragenic site is the region

encompassing the translation initiation or termination codon of the open reading frame (ORF) of the gene. Since, as is known in the art, the translation initiation codon is typically 5'-AUG (in transcribed mRNA molecules; 5'-ATG in the corresponding DNA molecule), the translation initiation
5 codon is also referred to as the "AUG codon," the "start codon" or the "AUG start codon". A minority of genes have a translation initiation codon having the RNA sequence 5'-GUG, 5'-UUG or 5'-CUG, and 5'-AUA, 5'-ACG and 5'-CUG have been
10 shown to function in vivo. Thus, the terms "translation initiation codon" and "start codon" can encompass many codon sequences, even though the initiator amino acid in each instance is typically methionine (in eukaryotes) or formylmethionine (in prokaryotes). It is also known in the
15 art that eukaryotic and prokaryotic genes may have two or more alternative start codons, any one of which may be preferentially utilized for translation initiation in a particular cell type or tissue, or under a particular set of conditions. In the context of the invention, "start codon"
20 and "translation initiation codon" refer to the codon or codons that are used in vivo to initiate translation of an mRNA molecule transcribed from a gene encoding MHC class II transactivator, regardless of the sequence(s) of such codons.

It is also known in the art that a translation
25 termination codon (or "stop codon") of a gene may have one of three sequences, i.e., 5'-UAA, 5'-UAG and 5'-UGA (the corresponding DNA sequences are 5'-TAA, 5'-TAG and 5'-TGA, respectively). The terms "start codon region" and "translation initiation codon region" refer to a portion of
30 such an mRNA or gene that encompasses from about 25 to about 50 contiguous nucleotides in either direction (i.e., 5' or 3') from a translation initiation codon. Similarly, the terms "stop codon region" and "translation termination codon region" refer to a portion of such an mRNA or gene that
35 encompasses from about 25 to about 50 contiguous nucleotides in either direction (i.e., 5' or 3') from a translation

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termination codon.

The open reading frame (ORF) or "coding region," which is known in the art to refer to the region between the translation initiation codon and the translation termination codon, is also a region which may be targeted effectively. Other target regions include the 5' untranslated region (5'UTR), known in the art to refer to the portion of an mRNA in the 5' direction from the translation initiation codon, and thus including nucleotides between the 5' cap site and the translation initiation codon of an mRNA or corresponding nucleotides on the gene, and the 3' untranslated region (3'UTR), known in the art to refer to the portion of an mRNA in the 3' direction from the translation termination codon, and thus including nucleotides between the translation termination codon and 3' end of an mRNA or corresponding nucleotides on the gene. The 5' cap of an mRNA comprises an N7-methylated guanosine residue joined to the 5'-most residue of the mRNA via a 5'-5' triphosphate linkage. The 5' cap region of an mRNA is considered to include the 5' cap structure itself as well as the first 50 nucleotides adjacent to the cap. The 5' cap region may also be a preferred target region.

Although some eukaryotic mRNA transcripts are directly translated, many contain one or more regions, known as "introns," which are excised from a transcript before it is translated. The remaining (and therefore translated) regions are known as "exons" and are spliced together to form a continuous mRNA sequence. mRNA splice sites, i.e., intron-exon junctions, may also be preferred target regions, and are particularly useful in situations where aberrant splicing is implicated in disease, or where an overproduction of a particular mRNA splice product is implicated in disease. Aberrant fusion junctions due to rearrangements or deletions are also preferred targets. It has also been found that introns can also be effective, and therefore preferred,

target regions for antisense compounds targeted, for example, to DNA or pre-mRNA.

It is also known in the art that alternative RNA transcripts can be produced from the same genomic region of DNA. These alternative transcripts are generally known as "variants". More specifically, "pre-mRNA variants" are transcripts produced from the same genomic DNA that differ from other transcripts produced from the same genomic DNA in either their start or stop position and contain both intronic and exonic regions. Upon excision of one or more exon or intron regions or portions thereof during splicing, pre-mRNA variants produce smaller "mRNA variants". Consequently, mRNA variants are processed pre-mRNA variants and each unique pre-mRNA variant must always produce a unique mRNA variant as a result of splicing. These mRNA variants are also known as "alternative splice variants". If no splicing of the pre-mRNA variant occurs then the pre-mRNA variant is identical to the mRNA variant.

It is also known in the art that variants can be produced through the use of alternative signals to start or stop transcription and that pre-mRNAs and mRNAs can possess more than one start codon or stop codon. Variants that originate from a pre-mRNA or mRNA that use alternative start codons are known as "alternative start variants" of that pre-mRNA or mRNA. Those transcripts that use an alternative stop codon are known as "alternative stop variants" of that pre-mRNA or mRNA. One specific type of alternative stop variant is the "polyA variant" in which the multiple transcripts produced result from the alternative selection of one of the "polyA stop signals" by the transcription machinery, thereby producing transcripts that terminate at unique polyA sites.

Once one or more target sites have been identified, oligonucleotides are chosen which are sufficiently complementary to the target, i.e., hybridize sufficiently well and with sufficient specificity, to give the desired

effect.

In the context of this invention, "hybridization" means hydrogen bonding, which may be Watson-Crick, Hoogsteen or reversed Hoogsteen hydrogen bonding, between complementary nucleoside or nucleotide bases. For example, adenine and thymine are complementary nucleobases which pair through the formation of hydrogen bonds. "Complementary," as used herein, refers to the capacity for precise pairing between two nucleotides. For example, if a nucleotide at a certain position of an oligonucleotide is capable of hydrogen bonding with a nucleotide at the same position of a DNA or RNA molecule, then the oligonucleotide and the DNA or RNA are considered to be complementary to each other at that position. The oligonucleotide and the DNA or RNA are complementary to each other when a sufficient number of corresponding positions in each molecule are occupied by nucleotides which can hydrogen bond with each other. Thus, "specifically hybridizable" and "complementary" are terms which are used to indicate a sufficient degree of complementarity or precise pairing such that stable and specific binding occurs between the oligonucleotide and the DNA or RNA target. It is understood in the art that the sequence of an antisense compound need not be 100% complementary to that of its target nucleic acid to be specifically hybridizable. An antisense compound is specifically hybridizable when binding of the compound to the target DNA or RNA molecule interferes with the normal function of the target DNA or RNA to cause a loss of utility, and there is a sufficient degree of complementarity to avoid non-specific binding of the antisense compound to non-target sequences under conditions in which specific binding is desired, i.e., under physiological conditions in the case of in vivo assays or therapeutic treatment, and in the case of in vitro assays, under conditions in which the assays are performed.

Antisense and other compounds of the invention which

hybridize to the target and inhibit expression of the target are identified through experimentation, and the sequences of these compounds are hereinbelow identified as preferred embodiments of the invention. The target sites to which these preferred sequences are complementary are hereinbelow referred to as "active sites" and are therefore preferred sites for targeting. Therefore another embodiment of the invention encompasses compounds which hybridize to these active sites.

Antisense compounds are commonly used as research reagents and diagnostics. For example, antisense oligonucleotides, which are able to inhibit gene expression with exquisite specificity, are often used by those of ordinary skill to elucidate the function of particular genes. Antisense compounds are also used, for example, to distinguish between functions of various members of a biological pathway. Antisense modulation has, therefore, been harnessed for research use.

For use in kits and diagnostics, the antisense compounds of the present invention, either alone or in combination with other antisense compounds or therapeutics, can be used as tools in differential and/or combinatorial analyses to elucidate expression patterns of a portion or the entire complement of genes expressed within cells and tissues.

Expression patterns within cells or tissues treated with one or more antisense compounds are compared to control cells or tissues not treated with antisense compounds and the patterns produced are analyzed for differential levels of gene expression as they pertain, for example, to disease association, signaling pathway, cellular localization, expression level, size, structure or function of the genes examined. These analyses can be performed on stimulated or unstimulated cells and in the presence or absence of other compounds which affect expression patterns.

Examples of methods of gene expression analysis known in the art include DNA arrays or microarrays (Brazma and Vilo,

- FEBS Lett., 2000, 480, 17-24; Celis, et al., FEBS Lett., 2000, 480, 2-16), SAGE (serial analysis of gene expression) (Madden, et al., Drug Discov. Today, 2000, 5, 415-425), READS (restriction enzyme amplification of digested cDNAs) (Prashar and Weissman, Methods Enzymol., 1999, 303, 258-72), TOGA (total gene expression analysis) (Sutcliffe, et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 2000, 97, 1976-81), protein arrays and proteomics (Celis, et al., FEBS Lett., 2000, 480, 2-16; Jungblut, et al., Electrophoresis, 1999, 20, 2100-10), expressed sequence tag (EST) sequencing (Celis, et al., FEBS Lett., 2000, 480, 2-16; Larsson, et al., J. Biotechnol., 2000, 80, 143-57), subtractive RNA fingerprinting (SuRF) (Fuchs, et al., Anal. Biochem., 2000, 286, 91-98; Larson, et al., Cytometry, 2000, 41, 203-208), subtractive cloning, differential display (DD) (Jurecic and Belmont, Curr. Opin. Microbiol., 2000, 3, 316-21), comparative genomic hybridization (Carulli, et al., J. Cell Biochem. Suppl., 1998, 31, 286-96), FISH (fluorescent in situ hybridization) techniques (Going and Gusterson, Eur. J. Cancer, 1999, 35, 1895-904) and mass spectrometry methods (reviewed in (To, Comb. Chem. High Throughput Screen, 2000, 3, 235-41).

- The specificity and sensitivity of antisense is also harnessed by those of skill in the art for therapeutic uses. Antisense oligonucleotides have been employed as therapeutic moieties in the treatment of disease states in animals and man. Antisense oligonucleotide drugs, including ribozymes, have been safely and effectively administered to humans and numerous clinical trials are presently underway. It is thus established that oligonucleotides can be useful therapeutic modalities that can be configured to be useful in treatment regimes for treatment of cells, tissues and animals, especially humans.

- In the context of this invention, the term "oligonucleotide" refers to an oligomer or polymer of ribonucleic acid (RNA) or deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) or

mimetics thereof. This term includes oligonucleotides composed of naturally-occurring nucleobases, sugars and covalent internucleoside (backbone) linkages as well as oligonucleotides having non-naturally-occurring portions which function similarly. Such modified or substituted oligonucleotides are often preferred over native forms because of desirable properties such as, for example, enhanced cellular uptake, enhanced affinity for nucleic acid target and increased stability in the presence of nucleases.

While antisense oligonucleotides are a preferred form of antisense compound, the present invention comprehends other oligomeric antisense compounds, including but not limited to oligonucleotide mimetics such as are described below. The antisense compounds in accordance with this invention preferably comprise from about 8 to about 50 nucleobases (i.e. from about 8 to about 50 linked nucleosides). Particularly preferred antisense compounds are antisense oligonucleotides, even more preferably those comprising from about 12 to about 30 nucleobases. Antisense compounds include ribozymes, external guide sequence (EGS) oligonucleotides (oligozymes), and other short catalytic RNAs or catalytic oligonucleotides which hybridize to the target nucleic acid and modulate its expression.

As is known in the art, a nucleoside is a base-sugar combination. The base portion of the nucleoside is normally a heterocyclic base. The two most common classes of such heterocyclic bases are the purines and the pyrimidines. Nucleotides are nucleosides that further include a phosphate group covalently linked to the sugar portion of the nucleoside. For those nucleosides that include a pentofuranosyl sugar, the phosphate group can be linked to either the 2', 3' or 5' hydroxyl moiety of the sugar. In forming oligonucleotides, the phosphate groups covalently link adjacent nucleosides to one another to form a linear polymeric compound. In turn the respective ends of this linear polymeric structure can be further joined to form a

circular structure, however, open linear structures are generally preferred. Within the oligonucleotide structure, the phosphate groups are commonly referred to as forming the internucleoside backbone of the oligonucleotide. The normal linkage or backbone of RNA and DNA is a 3' to 5' phosphodiester linkage.

Specific examples of preferred antisense compounds useful in this invention include oligonucleotides containing modified backbones or non-natural internucleoside linkages.

10 As defined in this specification, oligonucleotides having modified backbones include those that retain a phosphorus atom in the backbone and those that do not have a phosphorus atom in the backbone. For the purposes of this specification, and as sometimes referenced in the art, 15 modified oligonucleotides that do not have a phosphorus atom in their internucleoside backbone can also be considered to be oligonucleosides.

Preferred modified oligonucleotide backbones include, for example, phosphorothioates, chiral phosphorothioates, 20 phosphorodithioates, phosphotriesters, aminoalkylphosphotriesters, methyl and other alkyl phosphonates including 3'-alkylene phosphonates, 5'-alkylene phosphonates and chiral phosphonates, phosphinates, phosphoramidates including 3'-amino phosphoramidate and aminoalkylphosphoramidates, 25 thionophosphoramidates, thionoalkylphosphonates, thionoalkylphosphotriesters, selenophosphates and boranophosphates having normal 3'-5' linkages, 2'-5' linked analogs of these, and those having inverted polarity wherein one or more internucleotide linkages is a 3' to 3', 5' to 5' or 2' 30 to 2' linkage. Preferred oligonucleotides having inverted polarity comprise a single 3' to 3' linkage at the 3'-most internucleotide linkage i.e. a single inverted nucleoside residue which may be abasic (the nucleobase is missing or has a hydroxyl group in place thereof). Various salts, mixed 35 salts and free acid forms are also included.

Representative United States patents that teach the

preparation of the above phosphorus-containing linkages include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 3,687,808; 4,469,863; 4,476,301; 5,023,243; 5,177,196; 5,188,897; 5,264,423; 5,276,019; 5,278,302; 5,286,717; 5,321,131; 5,399,676; 5,405,939; 5,453,496; 5,455,233; 5,466,677; 5,476,925; 5,519,126; 5,536,821; 5,541,306; 5,550,111; 5,563,253; 5,571,799; 5,587,361; 5,194,599; 5,565,555; 5,527,899; 5,721,218; 5,672,697 and 5,625,050, certain of which are commonly owned with this application, and each of which is herein incorporated by reference.

Preferred modified oligonucleotide backbones that do not include a phosphorus atom therein have backbones that are formed by short chain alkyl or cycloalkyl internucleoside linkages, mixed heteroatom and alkyl or cycloalkyl internucleoside linkages, or one or more short chain heteroatomic or heterocyclic internucleoside linkages. These include those having morpholino linkages (formed in part from the sugar portion of a nucleoside); siloxane backbones; sulfide, sulfoxide and sulfone backbones; formacetyl and thioformacetyl backbones; methylene formacetyl and thioformacetyl backbones; riboacetyl backbones; alkene containing backbones; sulfamate backbones; methyleneimino and methylenehydrazino backbones; sulfonate and sulfonamide backbones; amide backbones; and others having mixed N, O, S and CH₂ component parts.

Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of the above oligonucleosides include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 5,034,506; 5,166,315; 5,185,444; 5,214,134; 5,216,141; 5,235,033; 5,264,562; 5,264,564; 5,405,938; 5,434,257; 5,466,677; 5,470,967; 5,489,677; 5,541,307; 5,561,225; 5,596,086; 5,602,240; 5,610,289; 5,602,240; 5,608,046; 5,610,289; 5,618,704; 5,623,070; 5,663,312; 5,633,360; 5,677,437; 5,792,608; 5,646,269 and 5,677,439, certain of which are commonly owned with this application, and each of which is herein incorporated by reference.

In other preferred oligonucleotide mimetics, both the sugar and the internucleoside linkage, i.e., the backbone, of the nucleotide units are replaced with novel groups. The base units are maintained for hybridization with an appropriate nucleic acid target compound. One such oligomeric compound, an oligonucleotide mimetic that has been shown to have excellent hybridization properties, is referred to as a peptide nucleic acid (PNA). In PNA compounds, the sugar-backbone of an oligonucleotide is replaced with an amide containing backbone, in particular an aminoethylglycine backbone. The nucleobases are retained and are bound directly or indirectly to aza nitrogen atoms of the amide portion of the backbone. Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of PNA compounds include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 5,539,082; 5,714,331; and 5,719,262, each of which is herein incorporated by reference. Further teaching of PNA compounds can be found in Nielsen et al., *Science*, 1991, 254, 1497-1500.

Most preferred embodiments of the invention are oligonucleotides with phosphorothioate backbones and oligonucleosides with heteroatom backbones, and in particular $-\text{CH}_2-\text{NH}-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-$ [known as a methylene (methylimino) or MMI backbone], $-\text{CH}_2-\text{O}-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{CH}_2-$ and $-\text{O}-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$ [wherein the native phosphodiester backbone is represented as $-\text{O}-\text{P}-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-$] of the above referenced U.S. patent 5,489,677, and the amide backbones of the above referenced U.S. patent 5,602,240. Also preferred are oligonucleotides having morpholino backbone structures of the above-referenced U.S. patent 5,034,506.

Modified oligonucleotides may also contain one or more substituted sugar moieties. Preferred oligonucleotides comprise one of the following at the 2' position: OH; F; O-, S-, or N-alkyl; O-, S-, or N-alkenyl; O-, S- or N-alkynyl; or O-alkyl-O-alkyl, wherein the alkyl, alkenyl and alkynyl may be substituted or unsubstituted C_1 to C_{10} alkyl or C_2 to C_{10}

alkenyl and alkynyl. Particularly preferred are $O[(CH_2)_nO]_mCH_3$, $O(CH_2)_nOCH_3$, $O(CH_2)_nNH_2$, $O(CH_2)_nCH_3$, $O(CH_2)_nONH_2$, and $O(CH_2)_nON[(CH_2)_nCH_3]_2$, where n and m are from 1 to about 10. Other preferred oligonucleotides

- 5 comprise one of the following at the 2' position: C_1 to C_{10} lower alkyl, substituted lower alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, alkaryl, aralkyl, O-alkaryl or O-aralkyl, SH, SCH_3 , OCN, Cl, Br, CN, CF_3 , OCF_3 , $SOCH_3$, SO_2CH_3 , ONO_2 , NO_2 , N_3 , NH_2 , heterocycloalkyl, heterocycloalkaryl, aminoalkylamino, poly-
10 alkylamino, substituted silyl, an RNA cleaving group, a reporter group, an intercalator, a group for improving the pharmacokinetic properties of an oligonucleotide, or a group for improving the pharmacodynamic properties of an oligonucleotide, and other substituents having similar
15 properties. A preferred modification includes 2'-methoxyethoxy (2'-O- $CH_2CH_2OCH_3$, also known as 2'-O-(2-methoxyethyl) or 2'-MOE) (Martin et al., *Helv. Chim. Acta*, 1995, 78, 486-504) i.e., an alkoxyalkoxy group. A further preferred modification includes 2'-dimethylaminooxyethoxy, 20 i.e., a $O(CH_2)_2ON(CH_3)_2$ group, also known as 2'-DMAOE, as described in examples hereinbelow, and 2'-dimethylaminoethoxyethoxy (also known in the art as 2'-O-dimethylaminoethoxyethyl or 2'-DMAEOE), i.e., 2'-O- $CH_2-O-CH_2-N(CH_3)_2$, also described in examples hereinbelow.

- 25 A further preferred modification includes Locked Nucleic Acids (LNAs) in which the 2'-hydroxyl group is linked to the 3' or 4' carbon atom of the sugar ring thereby forming a bicyclic sugar moiety. The linkage is preferably a methylene ($-CH_2-$)_n group bridging the 2' oxygen atom and the 4' carbon atom wherein n is 1 or 2. LNAs and preparation thereof are
30 described in WO 98/39352 and WO 99/14226.

- Other preferred modifications include 2'-methoxy (2'-O- CH_3), 2'-aminopropoxy (2'-O- $CH_2CH_2CH_2NH_2$), 2'-allyl (2'- $CH_2-CH=CH_2$), 2'-O-allyl (2'-O- $CH_2-CH=CH_2$) and 2'-fluoro (2'-F).
35 The 2'-modification may be in the arabino (up) position or ribo (down) position. A preferred 2'-arabino modification is

2'-F. Similar modifications may also be made at other positions on the oligonucleotide, particularly the 3' position of the sugar on the 3' terminal nucleotide or in 2'-5' linked oligonucleotides and the 5' position of 5' terminal nucleotide. Oligonucleotides may also have sugar mimetics such as cyclobutyl moieties in place of the pentofuranosyl sugar. Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of such modified sugar structures include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 4,981,957; 5,118,800; 5,319,080; 5,359,044; 5,393,878; 5,446,137; 5,466,786; 5,514,785; 5,519,134; 5,567,811; 5,576,427; 5,591,722; 5,597,909; 5,610,300; 5,627,053; 5,639,873; 5,646,265; 5,658,873; 5,670,633; 5,792,747; and 5,700,920, certain of which are commonly owned with the instant application, and each of which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Oligonucleotides may also include nucleobase (often referred to in the art simply as "base") modifications or substitutions. As used herein, "unmodified" or "natural" nucleobases include the purine bases adenine (A) and guanine (G), and the pyrimidine bases thymine (T), cytosine (C) and uracil (U). Modified nucleobases include other synthetic and natural nucleobases such as 5-methylcytosine (5-me-C), 5-hydroxymethyl cytosine, xanthine, hypoxanthine, 2-aminoadenine, 6-methyl and other alkyl derivatives of adenine and guanine, 2-propyl and other alkyl derivatives of adenine and guanine, 2-thiouracil, 2-thiothymine and 2-thiocytosine, 5-halouracil and cytosine, 5-propynyl ($-C\equiv C-CH_3$) uracil and cytosine and other alkynyl derivatives of pyrimidine bases, 6-azo uracil, cytosine and thymine, 5-uracil (pseudouracil), 4-thiouracil, 8-halo, 8-amino, 8-thiol, 8-thioalkyl, 8-hydroxyl and other 8-substituted adenines and guanines, 5-halo particularly 5-bromo, 5-trifluoromethyl and other 5-substituted uracils and cytosines, 7-methylguanine and 7-methyladenine, 2-F-adenine, 2-amino-adenine, 8-azaguanine and 8-azaadenine, 7-deazaguanine and 7-deazaadenine and 3-deazaguanine and 3-deazaadenine. Further modified

nucleobases include tricyclic pyrimidines such as phenoxazine
cytidine (1H-pyrimido[5,4-b][1,4]benzoxazin-2(3H)-one),
phenothiazine cytidine (1H-pyrimido[5,4-b][1,4]benzothiazin-
2(3H)-one), G-clamps such as a substituted phenoxazine
5 cytidine (e.g. 9-(2-aminoethoxy)-H-pyrimido[5,4-
b][1,4]benzoxazin-2(3H)-one), carbazole cytidine (2H-
pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-2-one), pyridoindole cytidine (H-
pyrido[3',2':4,5]pyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidin-2-one). Modified
nucleobases may also include those in which the purine or
10 pyrimidine base is replaced with other heterocycles, for
example 7-deaza-adenine, 7-deazaguanosine, 2-aminopyridine
and 2-pyridone. Further nucleobases include those disclosed
in United States Patent No. 3,687,808, those disclosed in *The
Concise Encyclopedia Of Polymer Science And Engineering*,
15 pages 858-859, Kroschwitz, J.I., ed. John Wiley & Sons, 1990,
those disclosed by Englisch et al., *Angewandte Chemie*,
International Edition, 1991, 30, 613, and those disclosed by
Sanghvi, Y.S., Chapter 15, *Antisense Research and
Applications*, pages 289-302, Crooke, S.T. and Lebleu, B.,
20 ed., CRC Press, 1993. Certain of these nucleobases are
particularly useful for increasing the binding affinity of
the oligomeric compounds of the invention. These include 5-
substituted pyrimidines, 6-azapyrimidines and N-2, N-6 and O-
6 substituted purines, including 2-aminopropyladenine, 5-
25 propynyluracil and 5-propynylcytosine. 5-methylcytosine
substitutions have been shown to increase nucleic acid duplex
stability by 0.6-1.2°C (Sanghvi, Y.S., Crooke, S.T. and
Lebleu, B., eds., *Antisense Research and Applications*, CRC
Press, Boca Raton, 1993, pp. 276-278) and are presently
30 preferred base substitutions, even more particularly when
combined with 2'-O-methoxyethyl sugar modifications.

Representative United States patents that teach the
preparation of certain of the above noted modified
nucleobases as well as other modified nucleobases include,
35 but are not limited to, the above noted U.S. 3,687,808, as
well as U.S.: 4,845,205; 5,130,302; 5,134,066; 5,175,273;

5,367,066; 5,432,272; 5,457,187; 5,459,255; 5,484,908;
5,502,177; 5,525,711; 5,552,540; 5,587,469; 5,594,121,
5,596,091; 5,614,617; 5,645,985; 5,830,653; 5,763,588;
6,005,096; and 5,681,941, certain of which are commonly owned

- 5 with the instant application, and each of which is herein
incorporated by reference, and United States patent
5,750,692, which is commonly owned with the instant
application and also herein incorporated by reference.

- Another modification of the oligonucleotides of the
- 10 invention involves chemically linking to the oligonucleotide
one or more moieties or conjugates which enhance the
activity, cellular distribution or cellular uptake of the
oligonucleotide. The compounds of the invention can include
conjugate groups covalently bound to functional groups such
- 15 as primary or secondary hydroxyl groups. Conjugate groups of
the invention include intercalators, reporter molecules,
polyamines, polyamides, polyethylene glycols, polyethers,
groups that enhance the pharmacodynamic properties of
oligomers, and groups that enhance the pharmacokinetic
- 20 properties of oligomers. Typical conjugates groups include
cholesterols, lipids, phospholipids, biotin, phenazine,
folate, phenanthridine, anthraquinone, acridine, fluores-
ceins, rhodamines, coumarins, and dyes. Groups that enhance
the pharmacodynamic properties, in the context of this
- 25 invention, include groups that improve oligomer uptake,
enhance oligomer resistance to degradation, and/or strengthen
sequence-specific hybridization with RNA. Groups that
enhance the pharmacokinetic properties, in the context of
this invention, include groups that improve oligomer uptake,
- 30 distribution, metabolism or excretion. Representative
conjugate groups are disclosed in International Patent
Application PCT/US92/09196, filed October 23, 1992 the entire
disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.
Conjugate moieties include but are not limited to lipid
- 35 moieties such as a cholesterol moiety (Letsinger et al.,
Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, 1989, 86, 6553-6556), cholic acid

(Manoharan et al., *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.*, **1994**, *4*, 1053-1060), a thioether, e.g., hexyl-S-tritylthiol (Manoharan et al., *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.*, **1992**, *660*, 306-309; Manoharan et al., *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.*, **1993**, *3*, 2765-2770), a

5 thiocholesterol (Oberhauser et al., *Nucl. Acids Res.*, **1992**, *20*, 533-538), an aliphatic chain, e.g., dodecandiol or undecyl residues (Saison-Behmoaras et al., *EMBO J.*, **1991**, *10*, 1111-1118; Kabanov et al., *FEBS Lett.*, **1990**, *259*, 327-330; Svinarchuk et al., *Biochimie*, **1993**, *75*, 49-54), a

10 phospholipid, e.g., di-hexadecyl-rac-glycerol or triethylammonium 1,2-di-O-hexadecyl-rac-glycero-3-H-phosphonate (Manoharan et al., *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1995**, *36*, 3651-3654; Shea et al., *Nucl. Acids Res.*, **1990**, *18*, 3777-3783), a

15 polyamine or a polyethylene glycol chain (Manoharan et al., *Nucleosides & Nucleotides*, **1995**, *14*, 969-973), or adamantane acetic acid (Manoharan et al., *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1995**, *36*, 3651-3654), a palmityl moiety (Mishra et al., *Biochim. Biophys. Acta*, **1995**, *1264*, 229-237), or an octadecylamine or hexylamino-carbonyl-oxycholesterol moiety (Crooke et al., *J.*

20 *Pharmacol. Exp. Ther.*, **1996**, *277*, 923-937. Oligonucleotides of the invention may also be conjugated to active drug substances, for example, aspirin, warfarin, phenylbutazone, ibuprofen, suprofen, fenbufen, ketoprofen, (S)-(+)-

pranoprofen, carprofen, dansylsarcosine, 2,3,5-triiodobenzoic

25 acid, flufenamic acid, folinic acid, a benzothiadiazide, chlorothiazide, a diazepine, indomethacin, a barbiturate, a cephalosporin, a sulfa drug, an antidiabetic, an antibacterial or an antibiotic. Oligonucleotide-drug conjugates and their preparation are described in United

30 States Patent Application 09/334,130 (filed June 15, 1999) which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of such oligonucleotide conjugates include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 4,828,979; 4,948,882; 5,218,105;

35 5,525,465; 5,541,313; 5,545,730; 5,552,538; 5,578,717, 5,580,731; 5,580,731; 5,591,584; 5,109,124; 5,118,802;

5,138,045; 5,414,077; 5,486,603; 5,512,439; 5,578,718;
5,608,046; 4,587,044; 4,605,735; 4,667,025; 4,762,779;
4,789,737; 4,824,941; 4,835,263; 4,876,335; 4,904,582;
4,958,013; 5,082,830; 5,112,963; 5,214,136; 5,082,830;
5 5,112,963; 5,214,136; 5,245,022; 5,254,469; 5,258,506;
5,262,536; 5,272,250; 5,292,873; 5,317,098; 5,371,241,
5,391,723; 5,416,203, 5,451,463; 5,510,475; 5,512,667;
5,514,785; 5,565,552; 5,567,810; 5,574,142; 5,585,481;
5,587,371; 5,595,726; 5,597,696; 5,599,923; 5,599,928 and
10 5,688,941, certain of which are commonly owned with the
instant application, and each of which is herein incorporated
by reference.

It is not necessary for all positions in a given
compound to be uniformly modified, and in fact more than one
15 of the aforementioned modifications may be incorporated in a
single compound or even at a single nucleoside within an
oligonucleotide. The present invention also includes
antisense compounds which are chimeric compounds. "Chimeric"
antisense compounds or "chimerae," in the context of this
20 invention, are antisense compounds, particularly
oligonucleotides, which contain two or more chemically
distinct regions, each made up of at least one monomer unit,
i.e., a nucleotide in the case of an oligonucleotide
compound. These oligonucleotides typically contain at least
25 one region wherein the oligonucleotide is modified so as to
confer upon the oligonucleotide increased resistance to
nuclease degradation, increased cellular uptake, and/or
increased binding affinity for the target nucleic acid. An
additional region of the oligonucleotide may serve as a
30 substrate for enzymes capable of cleaving RNA:DNA or RNA:RNA
hybrids. By way of example, RNase H is a cellular
endonuclease which cleaves the RNA strand of an RNA:DNA
duplex. Activation of RNase H, therefore, results in
cleavage of the RNA target, thereby greatly enhancing the
35 efficiency of oligonucleotide inhibition of gene expression.
Consequently, comparable results can often be obtained with

shorter oligonucleotides when chimeric oligonucleotides are used, compared to phosphorothioate deoxyoligonucleotides hybridizing to the same target region. Cleavage of the RNA target can be routinely detected by gel electrophoresis and, if necessary, associated nucleic acid hybridization techniques known in the art.

Chimeric antisense compounds of the invention may be formed as composite structures of two or more oligonucleotides, modified oligonucleotides, oligonucleosides and/or oligonucleotide mimetics as described above. Such compounds have also been referred to in the art as hybrids or gapmers. Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of such hybrid structures include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 5,013,830; 5,149,797; 5,220,007; 5,256,775; 5,366,878; 5,403,711; 5,491,133; 5,565,350; 5,623,065; 5,652,355; 5,652,356; and 5,700,922, certain of which are commonly owned with the instant application, and each of which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

The antisense compounds used in accordance with this invention may be conveniently and routinely made through the well-known technique of solid phase synthesis. Equipment for such synthesis is sold by several vendors including, for example, Applied Biosystems (Foster City, CA). Any other means for such synthesis known in the art may additionally or alternatively be employed. It is well known to use similar techniques to prepare oligonucleotides such as the phosphorothioates and alkylated derivatives.

The antisense compounds of the invention are synthesized in vitro and do not include antisense compositions of biological origin, or genetic vector constructs designed to direct the in vivo synthesis of antisense molecules. The compounds of the invention may also be admixed, encapsulated, conjugated or otherwise associated with other molecules, molecule structures or mixtures of compounds, as for example, liposomes, receptor targeted molecules, oral, rectal, topical or other formulations, for assisting in

uptake, distribution and/or absorption. Representative United States patents that teach the preparation of such uptake, distribution and/or absorption assisting formulations include, but are not limited to, U.S.: 5,108,921; 5,354,844; 5,416,016; 5,459,127; 5,521,291; 5,543,158; 5,547,932; 5,583,020; 5,591,721; 4,426,330; 4,534,899; 5,013,556; 5,108,921; 5,213,804; 5,227,170; 5,264,221; 5,356,633; 5,395,619; 5,416,016; 5,417,978; 5,462,854; 5,469,854; 5,512,295; 5,527,528; 5,534,259; 5,543,152; 5,556,948; 5,580,575; and 5,595,756, each of which is herein incorporated by reference.

The antisense compounds of the invention encompass any pharmaceutically acceptable salts, esters, or salts of such esters, or any other compound which, upon administration to an animal including a human, is capable of providing (directly or indirectly) the biologically active metabolite or residue thereof. Accordingly, for example, the disclosure is also drawn to prodrugs and pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the compounds of the invention, pharmaceutically acceptable salts of such prodrugs, and other bioequivalents.

The term "prodrug" indicates a therapeutic agent that is prepared in an inactive form that is converted to an active form (i.e., drug) within the body or cells thereof by the action of endogenous enzymes or other chemicals and/or conditions. In particular, prodrug versions of the oligonucleotides of the invention are prepared as SATE [(S-acetyl-2-thioethyl) phosphate] derivatives according to the methods disclosed in WO 93/24510 to Gosselin et al., published December 9, 1993 or in WO 94/26764 and U.S. 5,770,713 to Imbach et al.

The term "pharmaceutically acceptable salts" refers to physiologically and pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the compounds of the invention: i.e., salts that retain the desired biological activity of the parent compound and do not impart undesired toxicological effects thereto.

Pharmaceutically acceptable base addition salts are

formed with metals or amines, such as alkali and alkaline earth metals or organic amines. Examples of metals used as cations are sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, and the like. Examples of suitable amines are

- 5 N,N'-dibenzylethylenediamine, chlorprocaine, choline, diethanolamine, dicyclohexylamine, ethylenediamine, N-methylglucamine, and procaine (see, for example, Berge et al., "Pharmaceutical Salts," *J. of Pharma Sci.*, 1977, 66, 1-19). The base addition salts of said acidic compounds are
- 10 prepared by contacting the free acid form with a sufficient amount of the desired base to produce the salt in the conventional manner. The free acid form may be regenerated by contacting the salt form with an acid and isolating the free acid in the conventional manner. The free acid forms
- 15 differ from their respective salt forms somewhat in certain physical properties such as solubility in polar solvents, but otherwise the salts are equivalent to their respective free acid for purposes of the present invention. As used herein, a "pharmaceutical addition salt" includes a pharmaceutically
- 20 acceptable salt of an acid form of one of the components of the compositions of the invention. These include organic or inorganic acid salts of the amines. Preferred acid salts are the hydrochlorides, acetates, salicylates, nitrates and phosphates. Other suitable pharmaceutically acceptable salts
- 25 are well known to those skilled in the art and include basic salts of a variety of inorganic and organic acids, such as, for example, with inorganic acids, such as for example hydrochloric acid, hydrobromic acid, sulfuric acid or phosphoric acid; with organic carboxylic, sulfonic, sulfo or
- 30 phospho acids or N-substituted sulfamic acids, for example acetic acid, propionic acid, glycolic acid, succinic acid, maleic acid, hydroxymaleic acid, methylmaleic acid, fumaric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid, lactic acid, oxalic acid, gluconic acid, glucaric acid, glucuronic acid, citric acid,
- 35 benzoic acid, cinnamic acid, mandelic acid, salicylic acid, 4-aminosalicylic acid, 2-phenoxybenzoic acid,

2-acetoxybenzoic acid, embonic acid, nicotinic acid or isonicotinic acid; and with amino acids, such as the 20 alpha-amino acids involved in the synthesis of proteins in nature, for example glutamic acid or aspartic acid, and also with phenylacetic acid, methanesulfonic acid, ethanesulfonic acid, 2-hydroxyethanesulfonic acid, ethane-1,2-disulfonic acid, benzenesulfonic acid, 4-methylbenzenesulfonic acid, naphthalene-2-sulfonic acid, naphthalene-1,5-disulfonic acid, 2- or 3-phosphoglycerate, glucose-6-phosphate, 10 N-cyclohexylsulfamic acid (with the formation of cyclamates), or with other acid organic compounds, such as ascorbic acid. Pharmaceutically acceptable salts of compounds may also be prepared with a pharmaceutically acceptable cation. Suitable pharmaceutically acceptable cations are well known to those 15 skilled in the art and include alkaline, alkaline earth, ammonium and quaternary ammonium cations. Carbonates or hydrogen carbonates are also possible.

For oligonucleotides, preferred examples of pharmaceutically acceptable salts include but are not limited 20 to (a) salts formed with cations such as sodium, potassium, ammonium, magnesium, calcium, polyamines such as spermine and spermidine, etc.; (b) acid addition salts formed with inorganic acids, for example hydrochloric acid, hydrobromic acid, sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, nitric acid and the 25 like; (c) salts formed with organic acids such as, for example, acetic acid, oxalic acid, tartaric acid, succinic acid, maleic acid, fumaric acid, gluconic acid, citric acid, malic acid, ascorbic acid, benzoic acid, tannic acid, palmitic acid, alginic acid, polyglutamic acid, 30 naphthalenesulfonic acid, methanesulfonic acid, p-toluenesulfonic acid, naphthalenedisulfonic acid, polygalacturonic acid, and the like; and (d) salts formed from elemental anions such as chlorine, bromine, and iodine.

The antisense compounds of the present invention can be 35 utilized for diagnostics, therapeutics, prophylaxis and as research reagents and kits. For therapeutics, an animal,

preferably a human, suspected of having a disease or disorder which can be treated by modulating the expression of MHC class II transactivator is treated by administering antisense compounds in accordance with this invention. The compounds of the invention can be utilized in pharmaceutical compositions by adding an effective amount of an antisense compound to a suitable pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier. Use of the antisense compounds and methods of the invention may also be useful prophylactically, e.g., to prevent or delay infection, inflammation or tumor formation, for example.

The antisense compounds of the invention are useful for research and diagnostics, because these compounds hybridize to nucleic acids encoding MHC class II transactivator, enabling sandwich and other assays to easily be constructed to exploit this fact. Hybridization of the antisense oligonucleotides of the invention with a nucleic acid encoding MHC class II transactivator can be detected by means known in the art. Such means may include conjugation of an enzyme to the oligonucleotide, radiolabelling of the oligonucleotide or any other suitable detection means. Kits using such detection means for detecting the level of MHC class II transactivator in a sample may also be prepared.

The present invention also includes pharmaceutical compositions and formulations which include the antisense compounds of the invention. The pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention may be administered in a number of ways depending upon whether local or systemic treatment is desired and upon the area to be treated. Administration may be topical (including ophthalmic and to mucous membranes including vaginal and rectal delivery), pulmonary, e.g., by inhalation or insufflation of powders or aerosols, including by nebulizer; intratracheal, intranasal, epidermal and transdermal), oral or parenteral. Parenteral administration includes intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intraperitoneal or intramuscular injection or infusion; or

intracranial, e.g., intrathecal or intraventricular, administration. Oligonucleotides with at least one 2'-O-methoxyethyl modification are believed to be particularly useful for oral administration.

- 5 Pharmaceutical compositions and formulations for topical administration may include transdermal patches, ointments, lotions, creams, gels, drops, suppositories, sprays, liquids and powders. Conventional pharmaceutical carriers, aqueous, powder or oily bases, thickeners and the like may be
- 10 necessary or desirable. Coated condoms, gloves and the like may also be useful. Preferred topical formulations include those in which the oligonucleotides of the invention are in admixture with a topical delivery agent such as lipids, liposomes, fatty acids, fatty acid esters, steroids,
- 15 chelating agents and surfactants. Preferred lipids and liposomes include neutral (e.g. dioleoylphosphatidyl DOPE ethanolamine, dimyristoylphosphatidyl choline DMPC, distearoylphosphatidyl choline) negative (e.g. dimyristoylphosphatidyl glycerol DMPG) and cationic (e.g.
- 20 dioleoyltetramethylaminopropyl DOTAP and dioleoylphosphatidyl ethanolamine DOTMA). Oligonucleotides of the invention may be encapsulated within liposomes or may form complexes thereto, in particular to cationic liposomes. Alternatively, oligonucleotides may be complexed to lipids, in particular to
- 25 cationic lipids. Preferred fatty acids and esters include but are not limited arachidonic acid, oleic acid, eicosanoic acid, lauric acid, caprylic acid, capric acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid, stearic acid, linoleic acid, linolenic acid, dicaprate, tricaprate, monoolein, dilaurin, glyceryl
- 30 1-monocaprate, 1-dodecylazacycloheptan-2-one, an acylcarnitine, an acylcholine, or a C₁₋₁₀ alkyl ester (e.g. isopropylmyristate IPM), monoglyceride, diglyceride or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof. Topical formulations are described in detail in United States patent
- 35 application 09/315,298 filed on May 20, 1999 which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

- Compositions and formulations for oral administration include powders or granules, microparticulates, nanoparticulates, suspensions or solutions in water or non-aqueous media, capsules, gel capsules, sachets, tablets or minitabets. Thickeners, flavoring agents, diluents, emulsifiers, dispersing aids or binders may be desirable. Preferred oral formulations are those in which oligonucleotides of the invention are administered in conjunction with one or more penetration enhancers
- 5 surfactants and chelators. Preferred surfactants include fatty acids and/or esters or salts thereof, bile acids and/or salts thereof. Preferred bile acids/salts include chenodeoxycholic acid (CDCA) and ursodeoxychenodeoxycholic acid (UDCA), cholic acid, dehydrocholic acid, deoxycholic acid, glucolic acid, glycholic acid, glycodeoxycholic acid, taurocholic acid, taurodeoxycholic acid, sodium tauro-24,25-dihydro-fusidate, sodium glycodihydrofusidate, . Preferred fatty acids include arachidonic acid, undecanoic acid, oleic acid, lauric acid, caprylic acid, capric acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid, stearic acid, linoleic acid, linolenic acid, dicaprate, tricaprate, monoolein, dilaurin, glyceryl 1-monocaprate, 1-dodecylazacycloheptan-2-one, an acylcarnitine, an acylcholine, or a monoglyceride, a diglyceride or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof (e.g. sodium). Also preferred are combinations of penetration enhancers, for example, fatty acids/salts in combination with bile acids/salts. A particularly preferred combination is the sodium salt of lauric acid, capric acid and UDCA. Further penetration enhancers include polyoxyethylene-9-lauryl ether, polyoxyethylene-20-cetyl ether. Oligonucleotides of the invention may be delivered orally in granular form including sprayed dried particles, or complexed to form micro or nanoparticles. Oligonucleotide complexing agents include poly-amino acids; polyimines; polyacrylates; polyalkylacrylates, polyoxethanes, polyalkylcyanoacrylates; cationized gelatins, albumins, starches, acrylates,
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polyethyleneglycols (PEG) and starches;
polyalkylcyanoacrylates; DEAE-derivatized polyimines,
pollulans, celluloses and starches. Particularly preferred
complexing agents include chitosan, N-trimethylchitosan,
5 poly-L-lysine, polyhistidine, polyornithine, polyspermines,
protamine, polyvinylpyridine, polythiodiethylamino-
methylethylene P(TDAE), polyaminostyrene (e.g. p-amino),
poly(methylcyanoacrylate), poly(ethylcyanoacrylate),
poly(butylcyanoacrylate), poly(isobutylcyanoacrylate),
10 poly(isohexylcynaoacrylate), DEAE-methacrylate, DEAE-
hexylacrylate, DEAE-acrylamide, DEAE-albumin and DEAE-
dextran, polymethylacrylate, polyhexylacrylate, poly(D,L-
lactic acid), poly(DL-lactic-co-glycolic acid (PLGA),
alginate, and polyethyleneglycol (PEG). Oral formulations
15 for oligonucleotides and their preparation are described in
detail in United States applications 08/886,829 (filed July
1, 1997), 09/108,673 (filed July 1, 1998), 09/256,515 (filed
February 23, 1999), 09/082,624 (filed May 21, 1998) and
09/315,298 (filed May 20, 1999) each of which is incorporated
20 herein by reference in their entirety.

Compositions and formulations for parenteral,
intrathecal or intraventricular administration may include
sterile aqueous solutions which may also contain buffers,
diluent and other suitable additives such as, but not
25 limited to, penetration enhancers, carrier compounds and
other pharmaceutically acceptable carriers or excipients.

Pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention
include, but are not limited to, solutions, emulsions, and
liposome-containing formulations. These compositions may be
30 generated from a variety of components that include, but are
not limited to, preformed liquids, self-emulsifying solids
and self-emulsifying semisolids.

The pharmaceutical formulations of the present
invention, which may conveniently be presented in unit dosage
35 form, may be prepared according to conventional techniques
well known in the pharmaceutical industry. Such techniques

include the step of bringing into association the active ingredients with the pharmaceutical carrier(s) or excipient(s). In general the formulations are prepared by uniformly and intimately bringing into association the active ingredients with liquid carriers or finely divided solid carriers or both, and then, if necessary, shaping the product.

The compositions of the present invention may be formulated into any of many possible dosage forms such as, but not limited to, tablets, capsules, gel capsules, liquid syrups, soft gels, suppositories, and enemas. The compositions of the present invention may also be formulated as suspensions in aqueous, non-aqueous or mixed media. Aqueous suspensions may further contain substances which increase the viscosity of the suspension including, for example, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, sorbitol and/or dextran. The suspension may also contain stabilizers.

In one embodiment of the present invention the pharmaceutical compositions may be formulated and used as foams. Pharmaceutical foams include formulations such as, but not limited to, emulsions, microemulsions, creams, jellies and liposomes. While basically similar in nature these formulations vary in the components and the consistency of the final product. The preparation of such compositions and formulations is generally known to those skilled in the pharmaceutical and formulation arts and may be applied to the formulation of the compositions of the present invention.

Emulsions

The compositions of the present invention may be prepared and formulated as emulsions. Emulsions are typically heterogeneous systems of one liquid dispersed in another in the form of droplets usually exceeding 0.1 μm in diameter. (Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 199; Rosoff, in *Pharmaceutical*

Dosage Forms, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., Volume 1, p. 245; Block in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 2, p. 335; Higuchi et al., in *Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences*, Mack Publishing Co., Easton, PA, 1985, p. 301). Emulsions are often biphasic systems comprising of two immiscible liquid phases intimately mixed and dispersed with each other. In general, emulsions may be either water-in-oil (w/o) or of the oil-in-water (o/w) variety. When an aqueous phase is finely divided into and dispersed as minute droplets into a bulk oily phase the resulting composition is called a water-in-oil (w/o) emulsion. Alternatively, when an oily phase is finely divided into and dispersed as minute droplets into a bulk aqueous phase the resulting composition is called an oil-in-water (o/w) emulsion. Emulsions may contain additional components in addition to the dispersed phases and the active drug which may be present as a solution in either the aqueous phase, oily phase or itself as a separate phase. Pharmaceutical excipients such as emulsifiers, stabilizers, dyes, and anti-oxidants may also be present in emulsions as needed. Pharmaceutical emulsions may also be multiple emulsions that are comprised of more than two phases such as, for example, in the case of oil-in-water-in-oil (o/w/o) and water-in-oil-in-water (w/o/w) emulsions. Such complex formulations often provide certain advantages that simple binary emulsions do not. Multiple emulsions in which individual oil droplets of an o/w emulsion enclose small water droplets constitute a w/o/w emulsion. Likewise a system of oil droplets enclosed in globules of water stabilized in an oily continuous provides an o/w/o emulsion.

Emulsions are characterized by little or no thermodynamic stability. Often, the dispersed or discontinuous phase of the emulsion is well dispersed into the external or continuous phase and maintained in this form through the means of emulsifiers or the viscosity of the

formulation. Either of the phases of the emulsion may be a semisolid or a solid, as is the case of emulsion-style ointment bases and creams. Other means of stabilizing emulsions entail the use of emulsifiers that may be incorporated into either phase of the emulsion. Emulsifiers may broadly be classified into four categories: synthetic surfactants, naturally occurring emulsifiers, absorption bases, and finely dispersed solids (Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 199).

Synthetic surfactants, also known as surface active agents, have found wide applicability in the formulation of emulsions and have been reviewed in the literature (Rieger, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 285; Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., 1988, volume 1, p. 199). Surfactants are typically amphiphilic and comprise a hydrophilic and a hydrophobic portion. The ratio of the hydrophilic to the hydrophobic nature of the surfactant has been termed the hydrophile/lipophile balance (HLB) and is a valuable tool in categorizing and selecting surfactants in the preparation of formulations. Surfactants may be classified into different classes based on the nature of the hydrophilic group: nonionic, anionic, cationic and amphoteric (Rieger, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 285).

Naturally occurring emulsifiers used in emulsion formulations include lanolin, beeswax, phosphatides, lecithin and acacia. Absorption bases possess hydrophilic properties such that they can soak up water to form w/o emulsions yet retain their semisolid consistencies, such as anhydrous lanolin and hydrophilic petrolatum. Finely divided solids have also been used as good emulsifiers especially in

combination with surfactants and in viscous preparations. These include polar inorganic solids, such as heavy metal hydroxides, nonswelling clays such as bentonite, attapulgite, hectorite, kaolin, montmorillonite, colloidal aluminum silicate and colloidal magnesium aluminum silicate, pigments and nonpolar solids such as carbon or glyceryl tristearate.

A large variety of non-emulsifying materials are also included in emulsion formulations and contribute to the properties of emulsions. These include fats, oils, waxes, fatty acids, fatty alcohols, fatty esters, humectants, hydrophilic colloids, preservatives and antioxidants (Block, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 335; Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 199).

Hydrophilic colloids or hydrocolloids include naturally occurring gums and synthetic polymers such as polysaccharides (for example, acacia, agar, alginic acid, carrageenan, guar gum, karaya gum, and tragacanth), cellulose derivatives (for example, carboxymethylcellulose and carboxypropylcellulose), and synthetic polymers (for example, carbomers, cellulose ethers, and carboxyvinyl polymers). These disperse or swell in water to form colloidal solutions that stabilize emulsions by forming strong interfacial films around the dispersed-phase droplets and by increasing the viscosity of the external phase.

Since emulsions often contain a number of ingredients such as carbohydrates, proteins, sterols and phosphatides that may readily support the growth of microbes, these formulations often incorporate preservatives. Commonly used preservatives included in emulsion formulations include methyl paraben, propyl paraben, quaternary ammonium salts, benzalkonium chloride, esters of p-hydroxybenzoic acid, and boric acid. Antioxidants are also commonly added to emulsion formulations to prevent deterioration of the formulation.

- Antioxidants used may be free radical scavengers such as tocopherols, alkyl gallates, butylated hydroxyanisole, butylated hydroxytoluene, or reducing agents such as ascorbic acid and sodium metabisulfite, and antioxidant synergists
- 5 such as citric acid, tartaric acid, and lecithin.

- The application of emulsion formulations via dermatological, oral and parenteral routes and methods for their manufacture have been reviewed in the literature (Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and
- 10 Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 199). Emulsion formulations for oral delivery have been very widely used because of reasons of ease of formulation, efficacy from an absorption and bioavailability standpoint. (Rosoff, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*,
- 15 Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 245; Idson, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 199). Mineral-oil base laxatives, oil-soluble vitamins
- 20 and high fat nutritive preparations are among the materials that have commonly been administered orally as o/w emulsions.

- In one embodiment of the present invention, the compositions of oligonucleotides and nucleic acids are formulated as microemulsions. A microemulsion may be defined
- 25 as a system of water, oil and amphiphile which is a single optically isotropic and thermodynamically stable liquid solution (Rosoff, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 245). Typically microemulsions are
- 30 systems that are prepared by first dispersing an oil in an aqueous surfactant solution and then adding a sufficient amount of a fourth component, generally an intermediate chain-length alcohol to form a transparent system. Therefore, microemulsions have also been described as
- 35 thermodynamically stable, isotropically clear dispersions of two immiscible liquids that are stabilized by interfacial

films of surface-active molecules (Leung and Shah, in: *Controlled Release of Drugs: Polymers and Aggregate Systems*, Rosoff, M., Ed., 1989, VCH Publishers, New York, pages 185-215). Microemulsions commonly are prepared via a combination of three to five components that include oil, water, surfactant, cosurfactant and electrolyte. Whether the microemulsion is of the water-in-oil (w/o) or an oil-in-water (o/w) type is dependent on the properties of the oil and surfactant used and on the structure and geometric packing of the polar heads and hydrocarbon tails of the surfactant molecules (Schott, in *Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences*, Mack Publishing Co., Easton, PA, 1985, p. 271).

The phenomenological approach utilizing phase diagrams has been extensively studied and has yielded a comprehensive knowledge, to one skilled in the art, of how to formulate microemulsions (Rosoff, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 245; Block, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 335). Compared to conventional emulsions, microemulsions offer the advantage of solubilizing water-insoluble drugs in a formulation of thermodynamically stable droplets that are formed spontaneously.

Surfactants used in the preparation of microemulsions include, but are not limited to, ionic surfactants, non-ionic surfactants, Brij 96, polyoxyethylene oleyl ethers, polyglycerol fatty acid esters, tetraglycerol monolaurate (ML310), tetraglycerol monooleate (MO310), hexaglycerol monooleate (PO310), hexaglycerol pentaoleate (PO500), decaglycerol monocaprate (MCA750), decaglycerol monooleate (MO750), decaglycerol sequioleate (SO750), decaglycerol decaoleate (DAO750), alone or in combination with cosurfactants. The cosurfactant, usually a short-chain alcohol such as ethanol, 1-propanol, and 1-butanol, serves to increase the interfacial fluidity by penetrating into the

surfactant film and consequently creating a disordered film because of the void space generated among surfactant molecules. Microemulsions may, however, be prepared without the use of cosurfactants and alcohol-free self-emulsifying microemulsion systems are known in the art. The aqueous phase may typically be, but is not limited to, water, an aqueous solution of the drug, glycerol, PEG300, PEG400, polyglycerols, propylene glycols, and derivatives of ethylene glycol. The oil phase may include, but is not limited to, materials such as Captex 300, Captex 355, Capmul MCM, fatty acid esters, medium chain (C8-C12) mono, di, and tri-glycerides, polyoxyethylated glyceryl fatty acid esters, fatty alcohols, polyglycolized glycerides, saturated polyglycolized C8-C10 glycerides, vegetable oils and silicone oil.

Microemulsions are particularly of interest from the standpoint of drug solubilization and the enhanced absorption of drugs. Lipid based microemulsions (both o/w and w/o) have been proposed to enhance the oral bioavailability of drugs, including peptides (Constantinides et al., *Pharmaceutical Research*, 1994, 11, 1385-1390; Ritschel, *Meth. Find. Exp. Clin. Pharmacol.*, 1993, 13, 205). Microemulsions afford advantages of improved drug solubilization, protection of drug from enzymatic hydrolysis, possible enhancement of drug absorption due to surfactant-induced alterations in membrane fluidity and permeability, ease of preparation, ease of oral administration over solid dosage forms, improved clinical potency, and decreased toxicity (Constantinides et al., *Pharmaceutical Research*, 1994, 11, 1385; Ho et al., *J. Pharm. Sci.*, 1996, 85, 138-143). Often microemulsions may form spontaneously when their components are brought together at ambient temperature. This may be particularly advantageous when formulating thermolabile drugs, peptides or oligonucleotides. Microemulsions have also been effective in the transdermal delivery of active components in both cosmetic and pharmaceutical applications. It is expected

that the microemulsion compositions and formulations of the present invention will facilitate the increased systemic absorption of oligonucleotides and nucleic acids from the gastrointestinal tract, as well as improve the local cellular uptake of oligonucleotides and nucleic acids within the gastrointestinal tract, vagina, buccal cavity and other areas of administration.

Microemulsions of the present invention may also contain additional components and additives such as sorbitan monostearate (Grill 3), Labrasol, and penetration enhancers to improve the properties of the formulation and to enhance the absorption of the oligonucleotides and nucleic acids of the present invention. Penetration enhancers used in the microemulsions of the present invention may be classified as belonging to one of five broad categories - surfactants, fatty acids, bile salts, chelating agents, and non-chelating non-surfactants (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1991, p. 92). Each of these classes has been discussed above.

Liposomes

There are many organized surfactant structures besides microemulsions that have been studied and used for the formulation of drugs. These include monolayers, micelles, bilayers and vesicles. Vesicles, such as liposomes, have attracted great interest because of their specificity and the duration of action they offer from the standpoint of drug delivery. As used in the present invention, the term "liposome" means a vesicle composed of amphiphilic lipids arranged in a spherical bilayer or bilayers.

Liposomes are unilamellar or multilamellar vesicles which have a membrane formed from a lipophilic material and an aqueous interior. The aqueous portion contains the composition to be delivered. Cationic liposomes possess the advantage of being able to fuse to the cell wall. Non-

cationic liposomes, although not able to fuse as efficiently with the cell wall, are taken up by macrophages *in vivo*.

- In order to cross intact mammalian skin, lipid vesicles must pass through a series of fine pores, each with a diameter less than 50 nm, under the influence of a suitable transdermal gradient. Therefore, it is desirable to use a liposome which is highly deformable and able to pass through such fine pores.

- Further advantages of liposomes include; liposomes obtained from natural phospholipids are biocompatible and biodegradable; liposomes can incorporate a wide range of water and lipid soluble drugs; liposomes can protect encapsulated drugs in their internal compartments from metabolism and degradation (Rosoff, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Lieberman, Rieger and Banker (Eds.), 1988, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, N.Y., volume 1, p. 245). Important considerations in the preparation of liposome formulations are the lipid surface charge, vesicle size and the aqueous volume of the liposomes.
- Liposomes are useful for the transfer and delivery of active ingredients to the site of action. Because the liposomal membrane is structurally similar to biological membranes, when liposomes are applied to a tissue, the liposomes start to merge with the cellular membranes. As the merging of the liposome and cell progresses, the liposomal contents are emptied into the cell where the active agent may act.

- Liposomal formulations have been the focus of extensive investigation as the mode of delivery for many drugs. There is growing evidence that for topical administration, liposomes present several advantages over other formulations. Such advantages include reduced side-effects related to high systemic absorption of the administered drug, increased accumulation of the administered drug at the desired target, and the ability to administer a wide variety of drugs, both hydrophilic and hydrophobic, into the skin.

Several reports have detailed the ability of liposomes to deliver agents including high-molecular weight DNA into the skin. Compounds including analgesics, antibodies, hormones and high-molecular weight DNAs have been administered to the skin. The majority of applications resulted in the targeting of the upper epidermis.

Liposomes fall into two broad classes. Cationic liposomes are positively charged liposomes which interact with the negatively charged DNA molecules to form a stable complex. The positively charged DNA/liposome complex binds to the negatively charged cell surface and is internalized in an endosome. Due to the acidic pH within the endosome, the liposomes are ruptured, releasing their contents into the cell cytoplasm (Wang et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.*, **1987**, 147, 980-985).

Liposomes which are pH-sensitive or negatively-charged, entrap DNA rather than complex with it. Since both the DNA and the lipid are similarly charged, repulsion rather than complex formation occurs. Nevertheless, some DNA is entrapped within the aqueous interior of these liposomes. pH-sensitive liposomes have been used to deliver DNA encoding the thymidine kinase gene to cell monolayers in culture. Expression of the exogenous gene was detected in the target cells (Zhou et al., *Journal of Controlled Release*, **1992**, 19, 269-274).

One major type of liposomal composition includes phospholipids other than naturally-derived phosphatidylcholine. Neutral liposome compositions, for example, can be formed from dimyristoyl phosphatidylcholine (DMPC) or dipalmitoyl phosphatidylcholine (DPPC). Anionic liposome compositions generally are formed from dimyristoyl phosphatidylglycerol, while anionic fusogenic liposomes are formed primarily from dioleoyl phosphatidylethanolamine (DOPE). Another type of liposomal composition is formed from phosphatidylcholine (PC) such as, for example, soybean PC,

and egg PC. Another type is formed from mixtures of phospholipid and/or phosphatidylcholine and/or cholesterol.

Several studies have assessed the topical delivery of liposomal drug formulations to the skin. Application of
5 liposomes containing interferon to guinea pig skin resulted in a reduction of skin herpes sores while delivery of interferon via other means (e.g. as a solution or as an emulsion) were ineffective (Weiner et al., *Journal of Drug Targeting*, 1992, 2, 405-410). Further, an additional study
10 tested the efficacy of interferon administered as part of a liposomal formulation to the administration of interferon using an aqueous system, and concluded that the liposomal formulation was superior to aqueous administration (du Plessis et al., *Antiviral Research*, 1992, 18, 259-265).

Non-ionic liposomal systems have also been examined to
15 determine their utility in the delivery of drugs to the skin, in particular systems comprising non-ionic surfactant and cholesterol. Non-ionic liposomal formulations comprising Novasome™ I (glyceryl dilaurate/cholesterol/polyoxyethylene-
20 10-stearyl ether) and Novasome™ II (glyceryl distearate/cholesterol/polyoxyethylene-10-stearyl ether) were used to deliver cyclosporin-A into the dermis of mouse skin. Results indicated that such non-ionic liposomal systems were effective in facilitating the deposition of cyclosporin-A
25 into different layers of the skin (Hu et al. *S.T.P. Pharma. Sci.*, 1994, 4, 6, 466).

Liposomes also include "sterically stabilized" liposomes, a term which, as used herein, refers to liposomes comprising one or more specialized lipids that, when
30 incorporated into liposomes, result in enhanced circulation lifetimes relative to liposomes lacking such specialized lipids. Examples of sterically stabilized liposomes are those in which part of the vesicle-forming lipid portion of the liposome (A) comprises one or more glycolipids, such as
35 monosialoganglioside GM₁, or (B) is derivatized with one or more hydrophilic polymers, such as a polyethylene glycol

(PEG) moiety. While not wishing to be bound by any particular theory, it is thought in the art that, at least for sterically stabilized liposomes containing gangliosides, sphingomyelin, or PEG-derivatized lipids, the enhanced circulation half-life of these sterically stabilized liposomes derives from a reduced uptake into cells of the reticuloendothelial system (RES) (Allen et al., *FEBS Letters*, 1987, 223, 42; Wu et al., *Cancer Research*, 1993, 53, 3765).

- Various liposomes comprising one or more glycolipids are known in the art. Papahadjopoulos et al. (*Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.*, 1987, 507, 64) reported the ability of monosialoganglioside G_{M1} , galactocerebroside sulfate and phosphatidylinositol to improve blood half-lives of liposomes. These findings were expounded upon by Gabizon et al. (*Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.*, 1988, 85, 6949). U.S. Patent No. 4,837,028 and WO 88/04924, both to Allen et al., disclose liposomes comprising (1) sphingomyelin and (2) the ganglioside G_{M1} or a galactocerebroside sulfate ester. U.S. Patent No. 5,543,152 (Webb et al.) discloses liposomes comprising sphingomyelin. Liposomes comprising 1,2-sn-dimyristoylphosphatidylcholine are disclosed in WO 97/13499 (Lim et al.).

- Many liposomes comprising lipids derivatized with one or more hydrophilic polymers, and methods of preparation thereof, are known in the art. Sunamoto et al. (*Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn.*, 1980, 53, 2778) described liposomes comprising a nonionic detergent, 2C₁₂15G, that contains a PEG moiety. Illum et al. (*FEBS Lett.*, 1984, 167, 79) noted that hydrophilic coating of polystyrene particles with polymeric glycols results in significantly enhanced blood half-lives. Synthetic phospholipids modified by the attachment of carboxylic groups of polyalkylene glycols (e.g., PEG) are described by Sears (U.S. Patent Nos. 4,426,330 and 4,534,899). Klibanov et al. (*FEBS Lett.*, 1990, 268, 235) described experiments demonstrating that liposomes comprising phosphatidylethanolamine (PE) derivatized with PEG or PEG

- stearate have significant increases in blood circulation half-lives. Blume et al. (*Biochimica et Biophysica Acta*, 1990, 1029, 91) extended such observations to other PEG-derivatized phospholipids, e.g., DSPE-PEG, formed from the combination of distearoylphosphatidylethanolamine (DSPE) and PEG. Liposomes having covalently bound PEG moieties on their external surface are described in European Patent No. EP 0 445 131 B1 and WO 90/04384 to Fisher. Liposome compositions containing 1-20 mole percent of PE derivatized with PEG, and methods of use thereof, are described by Woodle et al. (U.S. Patent Nos. 5,013,556 and 5,356,633) and Martin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,213,804 and European Patent No. EP 0 496 813 B1). Liposomes comprising a number of other lipid-polymer conjugates are disclosed in WO 91/05545 and U.S. Patent No. 5,225,212 (both to Martin et al.) and in WO 94/20073 (Zalipsky et al.) Liposomes comprising PEG-modified ceramide lipids are described in WO 96/10391 (Choi et al.). U.S. Patent Nos. 5,540,935 (Miyazaki et al.) and 5,556,948 (Tagawa et al.) describe PEG-containing liposomes that can be further derivatized with functional moieties on their surfaces.

- A limited number of liposomes comprising nucleic acids are known in the art. WO 96/40062 to Thierry et al. discloses methods for encapsulating high molecular weight nucleic acids in liposomes. U.S. Patent No. 5,264,221 to Tagawa et al. discloses protein-bonded liposomes and asserts that the contents of such liposomes may include an antisense RNA. U.S. Patent No. 5,665,710 to Rahman et al. describes certain methods of encapsulating oligodeoxynucleotides in liposomes. WO 97/04787 to Love et al. discloses liposomes comprising antisense oligonucleotides targeted to the raf gene.

- Transfersomes are yet another type of liposomes, and are highly deformable lipid aggregates which are attractive candidates for drug delivery vehicles. Transfersomes may be described as lipid droplets which are so highly deformable that they are easily able to penetrate through pores which

are smaller than the droplet. Transfersomes are adaptable to the environment in which they are used, e.g. they are self-optimizing (adaptive to the shape of pores in the skin), self-repairing, frequently reach their targets without fragmenting, and often self-loading. To make transfersomes it is possible to add surface edge-activators, usually surfactants, to a standard liposomal composition. Transfersomes have been used to deliver serum albumin to the skin. The transfersome-mediated delivery of serum albumin has been shown to be as effective as subcutaneous injection of a solution containing serum albumin.

Surfactants find wide application in formulations such as emulsions (including microemulsions) and liposomes. The most common way of classifying and ranking the properties of the many different types of surfactants, both natural and synthetic, is by the use of the hydrophile/lipophile balance (HLB). The nature of the hydrophilic group (also known as the "head") provides the most useful means for categorizing the different surfactants used in formulations (Rieger, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, NY, 1988, p. 285).

If the surfactant molecule is not ionized, it is classified as a nonionic surfactant. Nonionic surfactants find wide application in pharmaceutical and cosmetic products and are usable over a wide range of pH values. In general their HLB values range from 2 to about 18 depending on their structure. Nonionic surfactants include nonionic esters such as ethylene glycol esters, propylene glycol esters, glyceryl esters, polyglyceryl esters, sorbitan esters, sucrose esters, and ethoxylated esters. Nonionic alkanolamides and ethers such as fatty alcohol ethoxylates, propoxylated alcohols, and ethoxylated/propoxylated block polymers are also included in this class. The polyoxyethylene surfactants are the most popular members of the nonionic surfactant class.

If the surfactant molecule carries a negative charge when it is dissolved or dispersed in water, the surfactant is

classified as anionic. Anionic surfactants include carboxylates such as soaps, acyl lactylates, acyl amides of amino acids, esters of sulfuric acid such as alkyl sulfates and ethoxylated alkyl sulfates, sulfonates such as alkyl benzene sulfonates, acyl isethionates, acyl taurates and sulfosuccinates, and phosphates. The most important members of the anionic surfactant class are the alkyl sulfates and the soaps.

10 If the surfactant molecule carries a positive charge when it is dissolved or dispersed in water, the surfactant is classified as cationic. Cationic surfactants include quaternary ammonium salts and ethoxylated amines. The quaternary ammonium salts are the most used members of this class.

15 If the surfactant molecule has the ability to carry either a positive or negative charge, the surfactant is classified as amphoteric. Amphoteric surfactants include acrylic acid derivatives, substituted alkylamides, N-alkylbetaines and phosphatides.

20 The use of surfactants in drug products, formulations and in emulsions has been reviewed (Rieger, in *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, NY, 1988, p. 285).

25 Penetration Enhancers

In one embodiment, the present invention employs various penetration enhancers to effect the efficient delivery of nucleic acids, particularly oligonucleotides, to the skin of animals. Most drugs are present in solution in both ionized and nonionized forms. However, usually only lipid soluble or lipophilic drugs readily cross cell membranes. It has been discovered that even non-lipophilic drugs may cross cell membranes if the membrane to be crossed is treated with a penetration enhancer. In addition to aiding the diffusion of non-lipophilic drugs across cell membranes, penetration enhancers also enhance the permeability of lipophilic drugs.

Penetration enhancers may be classified as belonging to one of five broad categories, i.e., surfactants, fatty acids, bile salts, chelating agents, and non-chelating non-surfactants (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1991, p.92). Each of the above mentioned classes of penetration enhancers are described below in greater detail.

Surfactants: In connection with the present invention, 10 surfactants (or "surface-active agents") are chemical entities which, when dissolved in an aqueous solution, reduce the surface tension of the solution or the interfacial tension between the aqueous solution and another liquid, with the result that absorption of oligonucleotides through the 15 mucosa is enhanced. In addition to bile salts and fatty acids, these penetration enhancers include, for example, sodium lauryl sulfate, polyoxyethylene-9-lauryl ether and polyoxyethylene-20-cetyl ether) (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1991, p.92); and 20 perfluorochemical emulsions, such as FC-43. Takahashi et al., *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.*, 1988, 40, 252).

Fatty acids: Various fatty acids and their derivatives which act as penetration enhancers include, for example, oleic acid, lauric acid, capric acid (n-decanoic acid), 25 myristic acid, palmitic acid, stearic acid, linoleic acid, linolenic acid, dicaprate, tricaprate, monoolein (1-monooleoyl-rac-glycerol), dilaurin, caprylic acid, arachidonic acid, glycerol 1-monocaprate, 1-dodecylazacycloheptan-2-one, acylcarnitines, acylcholines, 30 C₁₋₁₀ alkyl esters thereof (e.g., methyl, isopropyl and t-butyl), and mono- and di-glycerides thereof (i.e., oleate, laurate, caprate, myristate, palmitate, stearate, linoleate, etc.) (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1991, p.92; Muranishi, *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1990, 7, 1-33; El Hariri et 35 al., *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.*, 1992, 44, 651-654).

Bile salts: The physiological role of bile includes the facilitation of dispersion and absorption of lipids and fat-soluble vitamins (Brunton, Chapter 38 in: Goodman & Gilman's
5 *The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics*, 9th Ed., Hardman et al. Eds., McGraw-Hill, New York, 1996, pp. 934-935). Various natural bile salts, and their synthetic derivatives, act as penetration enhancers. Thus the term "bile salts" includes any of the naturally occurring components of bile as
10 well as any of their synthetic derivatives. The bile salts of the invention include, for example, cholic acid (or its pharmaceutically acceptable sodium salt, sodium cholate), dehydrocholic acid (sodium dehydrocholate), deoxycholic acid (sodium deoxycholate), glucolic acid (sodium glucolate),
15 glycholic acid (sodium glycocholate), glycodeoxycholic acid (sodium glycodeoxycholate), taurocholic acid (sodium taurocholate), taurodeoxycholic acid (sodium taurodeoxycholate), chenodeoxycholic acid (sodium chenodeoxycholate), ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA), sodium
20 tauro-24,25-dihydro-fusidate (STDHF), sodium glycodihydrofusidate and polyoxyethylene-9-lauryl ether (POE) (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1991, page 92; Swinyard, Chapter 39 In: *Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 18th Ed., Gennaro, ed., Mack
25 Publishing Co., Easton, PA, 1990, pages 782-783; Muranishi, *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, 1990, 7, 1-33; Yamamoto et al., *J. Pharm. Exp. Ther.*, 1992, 263, 25; Yamashita et al., *J. Pharm. Sci.*, 1990, 79, 579-583).

30 Chelating Agents: Chelating agents, as used in connection with the present invention, can be defined as compounds that remove metallic ions from solution by forming complexes therewith, with the result that absorption of oligonucleotides through the mucosa is enhanced.
35 regards to their use as penetration enhancers in the present invention, chelating agents have the added advantage of also

serving as DNase inhibitors, as most characterized DNA nucleases require a divalent metal ion for catalysis and are thus inhibited by chelating agents (Jarrett, *J. Chromatogr.*, **1993**, *618*, 315-339). Chelating agents of the invention include but are not limited to disodium ethylenediaminetetraacetate (EDTA), citric acid, salicylates (e.g., sodium salicylate, 5-methoxysalicylate and homovanilate), *N*-acyl derivatives of collagen, laureth-9 and *N*-amino acyl derivatives of beta-diketones (enamines) (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, **1991**, page 92; Muranishi, *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, **1990**, *7*, 1-33; Buur et al., *J. Control Rel.*, **1990**, *14*, 43-51).

Non-chelating non-surfactants: As used herein, non-chelating non-surfactant penetration enhancing compounds can be defined as compounds that demonstrate insignificant activity as chelating agents or as surfactants but that nonetheless enhance absorption of oligonucleotides through the alimentary mucosa (Muranishi, *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, **1990**, *7*, 1-33). This class of penetration enhancers include, for example, unsaturated cyclic ureas, 1-alkyl- and 1-alkenylazacyclo-alkanone derivatives (Lee et al., *Critical Reviews in Therapeutic Drug Carrier Systems*, **1991**, page 92); and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents such as diclofenac sodium, indomethacin and phenylbutazone (Yamashita et al., *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.*, **1987**, *39*, 621-626).

Agents that enhance uptake of oligonucleotides at the cellular level may also be added to the pharmaceutical and other compositions of the present invention. For example, cationic lipids, such as lipofectin (Junichi et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,705,188), cationic glycerol derivatives, and polycationic molecules, such as polylysine (Lollo et al., PCT Application WO 97/30731), are also known to enhance the cellular uptake of oligonucleotides.

Other agents may be utilized to enhance the penetration of the administered nucleic acids, including glycols such as ethylene glycol and propylene glycol, pyrrols such as 2-pyrrol, azones, and terpenes such as limonene and menthone.

5

Carriers

Certain compositions of the present invention also incorporate carrier compounds in the formulation. As used herein, "carrier compound" or "carrier" can refer to a nucleic acid, or analog thereof, which is inert (i.e., does not possess biological activity *per se*) but is recognized as a nucleic acid by *in vivo* processes that reduce the bioavailability of a nucleic acid having biological activity by, for example, degrading the biologically active nucleic acid or promoting its removal from circulation. The coadministration of a nucleic acid and a carrier compound, typically with an excess of the latter substance, can result in a substantial reduction of the amount of nucleic acid recovered in the liver, kidney or other extracirculatory reservoirs, presumably due to competition between the carrier compound and the nucleic acid for a common receptor. For example, the recovery of a partially phosphorothioate oligonucleotide in hepatic tissue can be reduced when it is coadministered with polyinosinic acid, dextran sulfate, polycytidic acid or 4-acetamido-4'-isothiocyano-stilbene-2,2'-disulfonic acid (Miyao et al., *Antisense Res. Dev.*, 1995, 5, 115-121; Takakura et al., *Antisense & Nucl. Acid Drug Dev.*, 1996, 6, 177-183).

Excipients

In contrast to a carrier compound, a "pharmaceutical carrier" or "excipient" is a pharmaceutically acceptable solvent, suspending agent or any other pharmacologically inert vehicle for delivering one or more nucleic acids to an animal. The excipient may be liquid or solid and is selected, with the planned manner of administration in mind,

so as to provide for the desired bulk, consistency, etc., when combined with a nucleic acid and the other components of a given pharmaceutical composition. Typical pharmaceutical carriers include, but are not limited to, binding agents (e.g., pregelatinized maize starch, polyvinylpyrrolidone or hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, etc.); fillers (e.g., lactose and other sugars, microcrystalline cellulose, pectin, gelatin, calcium sulfate, ethyl cellulose, polyacrylates or calcium hydrogen phosphate, etc.); lubricants (e.g., magnesium stearate, talc, silica, colloidal silicon dioxide, stearic acid, metallic stearates, hydrogenated vegetable oils, corn starch, polyethylene glycols, sodium benzoate, sodium acetate, etc.); disintegrants (e.g., starch, sodium starch glycolate, etc.); and wetting agents (e.g., sodium lauryl sulphate, etc.).

Pharmaceutically acceptable organic or inorganic excipient suitable for non-parenteral administration which do not deleteriously react with nucleic acids can also be used to formulate the compositions of the present invention. Suitable pharmaceutically acceptable carriers include, but are not limited to, water, salt solutions, alcohols, polyethylene glycols, gelatin, lactose, amylose, magnesium stearate, talc, silicic acid, viscous paraffin, hydroxymethylcellulose, polyvinylpyrrolidone and the like.

Formulations for topical administration of nucleic acids may include sterile and non-sterile aqueous solutions, non-aqueous solutions in common solvents such as alcohols, or solutions of the nucleic acids in liquid or solid oil bases. The solutions may also contain buffers, diluents and other suitable additives. Pharmaceutically acceptable organic or inorganic excipients suitable for non-parenteral administration which do not deleteriously react with nucleic acids can be used.

Suitable pharmaceutically acceptable excipients include, but are not limited to, water, salt solutions, alcohol, polyethylene glycols, gelatin, lactose, amylose, magnesium

stearate, talc, silicic acid, viscous paraffin, hydroxymethylcellulose, polyvinylpyrrolidone and the like.

Other Components

- 5 The compositions of the present invention may additionally contain other adjunct components conventionally found in pharmaceutical compositions, at their art-established usage levels. Thus, for example, the compositions may contain additional, compatible,
- 10 pharmaceutically-active materials such as, for example, antipruritics, astringents, local anesthetics or anti-inflammatory agents, or may contain additional materials useful in physically formulating various dosage forms of the compositions of the present invention, such as dyes,
- 15 flavoring agents, preservatives, antioxidants, opacifiers, thickening agents and stabilizers. However, such materials, when added, should not unduly interfere with the biological activities of the components of the compositions of the present invention. The formulations can be sterilized and,
- 20 if desired, mixed with auxiliary agents, e.g., lubricants, preservatives, stabilizers, wetting agents, emulsifiers, salts for influencing osmotic pressure, buffers, colorings, flavorings and/or aromatic substances and the like which do not deleteriously interact with the nucleic acid(s) of the
- 25 formulation.

Aqueous suspensions may contain substances which increase the viscosity of the suspension including, for example, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, sorbitol and/or dextran. The suspension may also contain stabilizers.

- 30 Certain embodiments of the invention provide pharmaceutical compositions containing (a) one or more antisense compounds and (b) one or more other chemotherapeutic agents which function by a non-antisense mechanism. Examples of such chemotherapeutic agents include
- 35 but are not limited to daunorubicin, daunomycin, dactinomycin, doxorubicin, epirubicin, idarubicin,

acid and one or more additional antisense compounds targeted to a second nucleic acid target. Numerous examples of antisense compounds are known in the art. Two or more combined compounds may be used together or sequentially.

5 The formulation of therapeutic compositions and their subsequent administration is believed to be within the skill of those in the art. Dosing is dependent on severity and responsiveness of the disease state to be treated, with the course of treatment lasting from several days to several
10 months, or until a cure is effected or a diminution of the disease state is achieved. Optimal dosing schedules can be calculated from measurements of drug accumulation in the body of the patient. Persons of ordinary skill can easily determine optimum dosages, dosing methodologies and
15 repetition rates. Optimum dosages may vary depending on the relative potency of individual oligonucleotides, and can generally be estimated based on EC_{50} s found to be effective in in vitro and in vivo animal models. In general, dosage is from 0.01 ug to 100 g per kg of body weight, and may be given
20 once or more daily, weekly, monthly or yearly, or even once every 2 to 20 years. Persons of ordinary skill in the art can easily estimate repetition rates for dosing based on measured residence times and concentrations of the drug in bodily fluids or tissues. Following successful treatment, it
25 may be desirable to have the patient undergo maintenance therapy to prevent the recurrence of the disease state, wherein the oligonucleotide is administered in maintenance doses, ranging from 0.01 ug to 100 g per kg of body weight, once or more daily, to once every 20 years.

30 While the present invention has been described with specificity in accordance with certain of its preferred embodiments, the following examples serve only to illustrate the invention and are not intended to limit the same.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

5 Nucleoside Phosphoramidites for Oligonucleotide Synthesis
Deoxy and 2'-alkoxy amidites

- 2'-Deoxy and 2'-methoxy beta-cyanoethyl-diisopropyl phosphoramidites were purchased from commercial sources (e.g. ChemGenes, Needham MA or Glen Research, Inc. Sterling VA).
- 10 Other 2'-O-alkoxy substituted nucleoside amidites are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 5,506,351, herein incorporated by reference. For oligonucleotides synthesized using 2'-alkoxy amidites, the standard cycle for unmodified oligonucleotides was utilized, except the wait step after
- 15 pulse delivery of tetrazole and base was increased to 360 seconds.

- Oligonucleotides containing 5-methyl-2'-deoxycytidine (5-Me-C) nucleotides were synthesized according to published methods [Sanghvi, et. al., *Nucleic Acids Research*, 1993, 21, 3197-3203] using commercially available phosphoramidites
- 20 (Glen Research, Sterling VA or ChemGenes, Needham MA).

2'-Fluoro amidites

2'-Fluorodeoxyadenosine amidites

- 25 2'-fluoro oligonucleotides were synthesized as described previously [Kawasaki, et. al., *J. Med. Chem.*, 1993, 36, 831-841] and United States patent 5,670,633, herein incorporated by reference. Briefly, the protected nucleoside N6-benzoyl-2'-deoxy-2'-fluoroadenosine was synthesized utilizing
- 30 commercially available 9-beta-D-arabinofuranosyladenine as starting material and by modifying literature procedures whereby the 2'-alpha-fluoro atom is introduced by a S_N2 -displacement of a 2'-beta-trityl group. Thus N6-benzoyl-9-beta-D-arabinofuranosyladenine was selectively protected in
- 35 moderate yield as the 3',5'-ditetrahydropyranyl (THP) intermediate. Deprotection of the THP and N6-benzoyl groups

was accomplished using standard methodologies and standard methods were used to obtain the 5'-dimethoxytrityl-(DMT) and 5'-DMT-3'-phosphoramidite intermediates.

5 **2'-Fluorodeoxyguanosine**

The synthesis of 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoroguanosine was accomplished using tetraisopropylidisiloxanyl (TPDS) protected 9-beta-D-arabinofuranosylguanine as starting material, and conversion to the intermediate diisobutryl-
10 arabinofuranosylguanosine. Deprotection of the TPDS group was followed by protection of the hydroxyl group with THP to give diisobutryl di-THP protected arabinofuranosylguanine. Selective O-deacylation and triflation was followed by treatment of the crude product with fluoride, then
15 deprotection of the THP groups. Standard methodologies were used to obtain the 5'-DMT- and 5'-DMT-3'-phosphoramidites.

2'-Fluorouridine

Synthesis of 2'-deoxy-2'-fluorouridine was accomplished
20 by the modification of a literature procedure in which 2,2'-anhydro-1-beta-D-arabinofuranosyluracil was treated with 70% hydrogen fluoride-pyridine. Standard procedures were used to obtain the 5'-DMT and 5'-DMT-3'phosphoramidites.

25 **2'-Fluorodeoxycytidine**

2'-deoxy-2'-fluorocytidine was synthesized via amination of 2'-deoxy-2'-fluorouridine, followed by selective protection to give N4-benzoyl-2'-deoxy-2'-fluorocytidine. Standard procedures were used to obtain the 5'-DMT and 5'-
30 DMT-3'phosphoramidites.

2'-O-(2-Methoxyethyl) modified amidites

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-substituted nucleoside amidites are prepared as follows, or alternatively, as per the methods of
35 Martin, P., *Helvetica Chimica Acta*, 1995, 78, 486-504.

2,2'-Anhydro[1-(beta-D-arabinofuranosyl)-5-methyluridine]

5-Methyluridine (ribosylthymine, commercially available through Yamasa, Choshi, Japan) (72.0 g, 0.279 M), diphenyl-
5 carbonate (90.0 g, 0.420 M) and sodium bicarbonate (2.0 g, 0.024 M) were added to DMF (300 mL). The mixture was heated to reflux, with stirring, allowing the evolved carbon dioxide gas to be released in a controlled manner. After 1 hour, the slightly darkened solution was concentrated under reduced
10 pressure. The resulting syrup was poured into diethylether (2.5 L), with stirring. The product formed a gum. The ether was decanted and the residue was dissolved in a minimum amount of methanol (ca. 400 mL). The solution was poured into fresh ether (2.5 L) to yield a stiff gum. The ether was
15 decanted and the gum was dried in a vacuum oven (60°C at 1 mm Hg for 24 h) to give a solid that was crushed to a light tan powder (57 g, 85% crude yield). The NMR spectrum was consistent with the structure, contaminated with phenol as its sodium salt (ca. 5%). The material was used as is for
20 further reactions (or it can be purified further by column chromatography using a gradient of methanol in ethyl acetate (10-25%) to give a white solid, mp 222-4°C).

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5-methyluridine

25 2,2'-Anhydro-5-methyluridine (195 g, 0.81 M), tris(2-methoxyethyl)borate (231 g, 0.98 M) and 2-methoxyethanol (1.2 L) were added to a 2 L stainless steel pressure vessel and placed in a pre-heated oil bath at 160°C. After heating for
48 hours at 155-160°C, the vessel was opened and the solution
30 evaporated to dryness and triturated with MeOH (200 mL). The residue was suspended in hot acetone (1 L). The insoluble salts were filtered, washed with acetone (150 mL) and the filtrate evaporated. The residue (280 g) was dissolved in CH₃CN (600 mL) and evaporated. A silica gel column (3 kg)
35 was packed in CH₂Cl₂/acetone/MeOH (20:5:3) containing 0.5%

Et₃NH. The residue was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (250 mL) and adsorbed onto silica (150 g) prior to loading onto the column. The product was eluted with the packing solvent to give 160 g (63%) of product. Additional material was
5 obtained by reworking impure fractions.

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyluridine

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5-methyluridine (160 g, 0.506 M) was co-evaporated with pyridine (250 mL) and the dried residue
10 dissolved in pyridine (1.3 L). A first aliquot of dimethoxytrityl chloride (94.3 g, 0.278 M) was added and the mixture stirred at room temperature for one hour. A second aliquot of dimethoxytrityl chloride (94.3 g, 0.278 M) was added and the reaction stirred for an additional one hour.
15 Methanol (170 mL) was then added to stop the reaction. HPLC showed the presence of approximately 70% product. The solvent was evaporated and triturated with CH₃CN (200 mL). The residue was dissolved in CHCl₃ (1.5 L) and extracted with 2x500 mL of saturated NaHCO₃ and 2x500 mL of saturated NaCl.
20 The organic phase was dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered and evaporated. 275 g of residue was obtained. The residue was purified on a 3.5 kg silica gel column, packed and eluted with EtOAc/hexane/acetone (5:5:1) containing 0.5% Et₃NH. The pure fractions were evaporated to give 164 g of product.
25 Approximately 20 g additional was obtained from the impure fractions to give a total yield of 183 g (57%).

3'-O-Acetyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyluridine

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyluridine (106 g, 0.167 M), DMF/pyridine (750 mL of a 3:1 mixture prepared from 562 mL of DMF and 188 mL of pyridine) and acetic anhydride (24.38 mL, 0.258 M) were combined and stirred at room temperature for 24 hours. The reaction was
35 monitored by TLC by first quenching the TLC sample with the addition of MeOH. Upon completion of the reaction, as judged

- by TLC, MeOH (50 mL) was added and the mixture evaporated at 35°C. The residue was dissolved in CHCl₃ (800 mL) and extracted with 2x200 mL of saturated sodium bicarbonate and 2x200 mL of saturated NaCl. The water layers were back
- 5 extracted with 200 mL of CHCl₃. The combined organics were dried with sodium sulfate and evaporated to give 122 g of residue (approx. 90% product). The residue was purified on a 3.5 kg silica gel column and eluted using EtOAc/hexane(4:1). Pure product fractions were evaporated to yield 96 g (84%).
- 10 An additional 1.5 g was recovered from later fractions.

3'-O-Acetyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyl-4-triazoleuridine

- A first solution was prepared by dissolving 3'-O-acetyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyluridine (96 g, 0.144 M) in CH₃CN (700 mL) and set aside. Triethylamine (189 mL, 1.44 M) was added to a solution of triazole (90 g, 1.3 M) in CH₃CN (1 L), cooled to -5°C and stirred for 0.5 h using an overhead stirrer. POCl₃ was added dropwise, over a 30 minute
- 15 period, to the stirred solution maintained at 0-10°C, and the resulting mixture stirred for an additional 2 hours. The first solution was added dropwise, over a 45 minute period, to the latter solution. The resulting reaction mixture was stored overnight in a cold room. Salts were filtered from
- 20 the reaction mixture and the solution was evaporated. The residue was dissolved in EtOAc (1 L) and the insoluble solids were removed by filtration. The filtrate was washed with 1x300 mL of NaHCO₃ and 2x300 mL of saturated NaCl, dried over sodium sulfate and evaporated. The residue was triturated
- 25 with EtOAc to give the title compound.
- 30

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methylcytidine

- A solution of 3'-O-acetyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methyl-4-triazoleuridine (103 g, 0.141 M)
- 35 in dioxane (500 mL) and NH₄OH (30 mL) was stirred at room temperature for 2 hours. The dioxane solution was evaporated

and the residue azeotroped with MeOH (2x200 mL). The residue was dissolved in MeOH (300 mL) and transferred to a 2 liter stainless steel pressure vessel. MeOH (400 mL) saturated with NH_3 gas was added and the vessel heated to 100°C for 2 hours (TLC showed complete conversion). The vessel contents were evaporated to dryness and the residue was dissolved in EtOAc (500 mL) and washed once with saturated NaCl (200 mL). The organics were dried over sodium sulfate and the solvent was evaporated to give 85 g (95%) of the title compound.

10

N4-Benzoyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methylcytidine

2'-O-Methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methylcytidine (85 g, 0.134 M) was dissolved in DMF (800 mL) and benzoic anhydride (37.2 g, 0.165 M) was added with stirring. After stirring for 3 hours, TLC showed the reaction to be approximately 95% complete. The solvent was evaporated and the residue azeotroped with MeOH (200 mL). The residue was dissolved in CHCl_3 (700 mL) and extracted with saturated NaHCO_3 (2x300 mL) and saturated NaCl (2x300 mL), dried over MgSO_4 and evaporated to give a residue (96 g). The residue was chromatographed on a 1.5 kg silica column using EtOAc/hexane (1:1) containing 0.5% Et_3NH as the eluting solvent. The pure product fractions were evaporated to give 90 g (90%) of the title compound.

25

N4-Benzoyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methylcytidine-3'-amidite

N4-Benzoyl-2'-O-methoxyethyl-5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-5-methylcytidine (74 g, 0.10 M) was dissolved in CH_2Cl_2 (1 L). Tetrazole diisopropylamine (7.1 g) and 2-cyanoethoxy-tetra-(isopropyl)phosphite (40.5 mL, 0.123 M) were added with stirring, under a nitrogen atmosphere. The resulting mixture was stirred for 20 hours at room temperature (TLC showed the reaction to be 95% complete). The reaction mixture was extracted with saturated NaHCO_3 (1x300 mL) and saturated NaCl

35

(3x300 mL). The aqueous washes were back-extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (300 mL), and the extracts were combined, dried over MgSO_4 and concentrated. The residue obtained was chromatographed on a 1.5 kg silica column using EtOAc/hexane (3:1) as the eluting solvent. The pure fractions were combined to give 90.6 g (87%) of the title compound.

2'-O-(Aminooxyethyl) nucleoside amidites and 2'-O-(dimethylaminooxyethyl) nucleoside amidites

2'-(Dimethylaminooxyethoxy) nucleoside amidites

2'-(Dimethylaminooxyethoxy) nucleoside amidites [also known in the art as 2'-O-(dimethylaminooxyethyl) nucleoside amidites] are prepared as described in the following paragraphs. Adenosine, cytidine and guanosine nucleoside amidites are prepared similarly to the thymidine (5-methyluridine) except the exocyclic amines are protected with a benzoyl moiety in the case of adenosine and cytidine and with isobutyryl in the case of guanosine.

5'-O-tert-Butyldiphenylsilyl-O²-2'-anhydro-5-methyluridine

O²-2'-anhydro-5-methyluridine (Pro. Bio. Sint., Varese, Italy, 100.0g, 0.416 mmol), dimethylaminopyridine (0.66g, 0.013eq, 0.0054mmol) were dissolved in dry pyridine (500 ml) at ambient temperature under an argon atmosphere and with mechanical stirring. *tert*-Butyldiphenylchlorosilane (125.8g, 119.0mL, 1.1eq, 0.458mmol) was added in one portion. The reaction was stirred for 16 h at ambient temperature. TLC (R_f 0.22, ethyl acetate) indicated a complete reaction. The solution was concentrated under reduced pressure to a thick oil. This was partitioned between dichloromethane (1 L) and saturated sodium bicarbonate (2x1 L) and brine (1 L). The organic layer was dried over sodium sulfate and concentrated under reduced pressure to a thick oil. The oil was dissolved

in a 1:1 mixture of ethyl acetate and ethyl ether (600mL) and the solution was cooled to -10°C. The resulting crystalline product was collected by filtration, washed with ethyl ether (3x200 mL) and dried
5 (40°C, 1mm Hg, 24 h) to 149g (74.8%) of white solid. TLC and NMR were consistent with pure product.

5'-O-tert-Butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-(2-hydroxyethyl)-5-methyluridine

10 In a 2 L stainless steel, unstirred pressure reactor was added borane in tetrahydrofuran (1.0 M, 2.0 eq, 622 mL). In the fume hood and with manual stirring, ethylene glycol (350 mL, excess) was added cautiously at first until the evolution of hydrogen gas subsided. 5'-O-tert-Butyldiphenylsilyl-O²-2'-
15 anhydro-5-methyluridine (149 g, 0.311 mol) and sodium bicarbonate (0.074 g, 0.003 eq) were added with manual stirring. The reactor was sealed and heated in an oil bath until an internal temperature of 160 °C was reached and then maintained for 16 h (pressure < 100 psig). The reaction
20 vessel was cooled to ambient and opened. TLC (Rf 0.67 for desired product and Rf 0.82 for ara-T side product, ethyl acetate) indicated about 70% conversion to the product. In order to avoid additional side product formation, the reaction was stopped, concentrated under reduced pressure (10
25 to 1mm Hg) in a warm water bath (40-100°C) with the more extreme conditions used to remove the ethylene glycol. [Alternatively, once the low boiling solvent is gone, the remaining solution can be partitioned between ethyl acetate and water. The product will be in the organic phase.] The
30 residue was purified by column chromatography (2kg silica gel, ethyl acetate-hexanes gradient 1:1 to 4:1). The appropriate fractions were combined, stripped and dried to product as a white crisp foam (84g, 50%), contaminated starting material (17.4g) and pure reusable starting material
35 20g. The yield based on starting material less pure

recovered starting material was 58%. TLC and NMR were consistent with 99% pure product.

5 **2'-O-([2-phthalimidoxy)ethyl]-5'-t-butyldiphenylsilyl-5-methyluridine**

- 5'-O-tert-Butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-(2-hydroxyethyl)-5-methyluridine (20g, 36.98mmol) was mixed with triphenylphosphine (11.63g, 44.36mmol) and N-hydroxyphthalimide (7.24g, 44.36mmol). It was then dried
- 10 over P₂O₅ under high vacuum for two days at 40°C. The reaction mixture was flushed with argon and dry THF (369.8mL, Aldrich, sure seal bottle) was added to get a clear solution. Diethyl-azodicarboxylate (6.98mL, 44.36mmol) was added dropwise to the reaction mixture. The rate of addition is
- 15 maintained such that resulting deep red coloration is just discharged before adding the next drop. After the addition was complete, the reaction was stirred for 4 hrs. By that time TLC showed the completion of the reaction (ethylacetate:hexane, 60:40). The solvent was evaporated in
- 20 vacuum. Residue obtained was placed on a flash column and eluted with ethyl acetate:hexane (60:40), to get 2'-O-([2-phthalimidoxy)ethyl]-5'-t-butyldiphenylsilyl-5-methyluridine as white foam (21.819 g, 86%).
- 25 **5'-O-tert-butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-[(2-formadoximinooxy)ethyl]-5-methyluridine**

- 2'-O-([2-phthalimidoxy)ethyl]-5'-t-butyldiphenylsilyl-5-methyluridine (3.1g, 4.5mmol) was dissolved in dry CH₂Cl₂ (4.5mL) and methylhydrazine (300mL, 4.64mmol) was added
- 30 dropwise at -10°C to 0°C. After 1 h the mixture was filtered, the filtrate was washed with ice cold CH₂Cl₂ and the combined organic phase was washed with water, brine and dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄. The solution was concentrated to get 2'-O-(aminooxyethyl) thymidine, which was then dissolved in MeOH (67.5mL). To this formaldehyde (20% aqueous solution, w/w, 1.1 eq.) was added and the resulting mixture was stirred for
- 35

1 h. Solvent was removed under vacuum; residue chromatographed to get 5'-O-*tert*-butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-[(2-formadoximinooxy) ethyl]-5-methyluridine as white foam (1.95 g, 78%).

5

5'-O-*tert*-Butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-[N,N-dimethylaminooxyethyl]-5-methyluridine

- 5'-O-*tert*-butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-[(2-formadoximinooxy)ethyl]-5-methyluridine (1.77g, 3.12mmol) was dissolved in a solution of 1M pyridinium p-toluenesulfonate (PPTS) in dry MeOH (30.6mL). Sodium cyanoborohydride (0.39g, 6.13mmol) was added to this solution at 10°C under inert atmosphere. The reaction mixture was stirred for 10 minutes at 10°C. After that the reaction vessel was removed from the ice bath and stirred at room temperature for 2 h, the reaction monitored by TLC (5% MeOH in CH₂Cl₂). Aqueous NaHCO₃ solution (5%, 10mL) was added and extracted with ethyl acetate (2x20mL). Ethyl acetate phase was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, evaporated to dryness. Residue was dissolved in a solution of 1M PPTS in MeOH (30.6mL). Formaldehyde (20% w/w, 30mL, 3.37mmol) was added and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 10 minutes. Reaction mixture cooled to 10°C in an ice bath, sodium cyanoborohydride (0.39g, 6.13mmol) was added and reaction mixture stirred at 10°C for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, the reaction mixture was removed from the ice bath and stirred at room temperature for 2 hrs. To the reaction mixture 5% NaHCO₃ (25mL) solution was added and extracted with ethyl acetate (2x25mL). Ethyl acetate layer was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to dryness. The residue obtained was purified by flash column chromatography and eluted with 5% MeOH in CH₂Cl₂ to get 5'-O-*tert*-butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O-[N,N-dimethylaminooxyethyl]-5-methyluridine as a white foam (14.6g, 80%).

35

2'-O-(dimethylaminooxyethyl)-5-methyluridine

Triethylamine trihydrofluoride (3.91mL, 24.0mmol) was dissolved in dry THF and triethylamine (1.67mL, 12mmol, dry, kept over KOH). This mixture of triethylamine-2HF was then
5 added to 5'-O-*tert*-butyldiphenylsilyl-2'-O- [N,N-dimethylaminoxyethyl]-5-methyluridine (1.40g, 2.4mmol) and stirred at room temperature for 24 hrs. Reaction was monitored by TLC (5% MeOH in CH₂Cl₂). Solvent was removed under vacuum and the residue placed on a flash column and
10 eluted with 10% MeOH in CH₂Cl₂ to get 2'-O-(dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine (766mg, 92.5%).

5'-O-DMT-2'-O-(dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine

2'-O-(dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine (750mg,
15 2.17mmol) was dried over P₂O₅ under high vacuum overnight at 40°C. It was then co-evaporated with anhydrous pyridine (20mL). The residue obtained was dissolved in pyridine (11mL) under argon atmosphere. 4-dimethylaminopyridine (26.5mg, 2.60mmol), 4,4'-dimethoxytrityl chloride (880mg,
20 2.60mmol) was added to the mixture and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature until all of the starting material disappeared. Pyridine was removed under vacuum and the residue chromatographed and eluted with 10% MeOH in CH₂Cl₂ (containing a few drops of pyridine) to get 5'-O-DMT-
25 2'-O-(dimethylamino-oxyethyl)-5-methyluridine (1.13g, 80%).

5'-O-DMT-2'-O-(2-N,N-dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine-3'-[(2-cyanoethyl)-N,N-diisopropylphosphoramidite]

5'-O-DMT-2'-O-(dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine
30 (1.08g, 1.67mmol) was co-evaporated with toluene (20mL). To the residue N,N-diisopropylamine tetrazonide (0.29g, 1.67mmol) was added and dried over P₂O₅ under high vacuum overnight at 40°C. Then the reaction mixture was dissolved in
35 anhydrous acetonitrile (8.4mL) and 2-cyanoethyl-N,N,N¹,N¹-tetraisopropylphosphoramidite (2.12mL, 6.08mmol) was added.

The reaction mixture was stirred at ambient temperature for 4 hrs under inert atmosphere. The progress of the reaction was monitored by TLC (hexane:ethyl acetate 1:1). The solvent was evaporated, then the residue was dissolved in ethyl acetate
5 (70mL) and washed with 5% aqueous NaHCO₃ (40mL). Ethyl acetate layer was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and concentrated. Residue obtained was chromatographed (ethyl acetate as eluent) to get 5'-O-DMT-2'-O-(2-N,N-dimethylaminoxyethyl)-5-methyluridine-3'-[(2-cyanoethyl)-
10 N,N-diisopropylphosphoramidite] as a foam (1.04g, 74.9%).

2'-(Aminoxyethoxy) nucleoside amidites

2'-(Aminoxyethoxy) nucleoside amidites [also known in the art as 2'-O-(aminoxyethyl) nucleoside amidites] are
15 prepared as described in the following paragraphs. Adenosine, cytidine and thymidine nucleoside amidites are prepared similarly.

N2-isobutyryl-6-O-diphenylcarbamoyl-2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl)-5'-O-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityl)guanosine-3'-[(2-cyanoethyl)-N,N-diisopropylphosphoramidite]
20

The 2'-O-aminoxyethyl guanosine analog may be obtained by selective 2'-O-alkylation of diaminopurine riboside. Multigram quantities of diaminopurine riboside may be
25 purchased from Schering AG (Berlin) to provide 2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl) diaminopurine riboside along with a minor amount of the 3'-O-isomer. 2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl) diaminopurine riboside may be resolved and converted to 2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl)guanosine by treatment with adenosine deaminase.
30 (McGee, D. P. C., Cook, P. D., Guinosso, C. J., WO 94/02501 A1 940203.) Standard protection procedures should afford 2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl)-5'-O-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityl)guanosine and 2-N-isobutyryl-6-O-diphenylcarbamoyl-2'-O-(2-ethylacetyl)-5'-O-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityl)guanosine which may be reduced to
35 provide 2-N-isobutyryl-6-O-diphenylcarbamoyl-2'-O-(2-hydroxyethyl)-5'-O-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityl)guanosine. As before

- the hydroxyl group may be displaced by N-hydroxyphthalimide via a Mitsunobu reaction, and the protected nucleoside may phosphitylated as usual to yield 2-N-isobutyryl-6-O-diphenylcarbamoyl-2'-O-([2-phthalimidoxy]ethyl)-5'-O-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityl)guanosine-3'-[(2-cyanoethyl)-N,N-diisopropylphosphoramidite].

2'-dimethylaminoethoxyethoxy (2'-DMAEOE) nucleoside amidites

- 2'-dimethylaminoethoxyethoxy nucleoside amidites (also known in the art as 2'-O-dimethylaminoethoxyethyl, i.e., 2'-O-CH₂-O-CH₂-N(CH₂)₂, or 2'-DMAEOE nucleoside amidites) are prepared as follows. Other nucleoside amidites are prepared similarly.
- 2'-O-[2(2-N,N-dimethylaminoethoxy)ethyl]-5-methyl uridine 2[2-(Dimethylamino)ethoxy]ethanol (Aldrich, 6.66 g, 50 mmol) is slowly added to a solution of borane in tetrahydrofuran (1 M, 10 mL, 10 mmol) with stirring in a 100 mL bomb. Hydrogen gas evolves as the solid dissolves. O²-, 2'-anhydro-5-methyluridine (1.2 g, 5 mmol), and sodium bicarbonate (2.5 mg) are added and the bomb is sealed, placed in an oil bath and heated to 155°C for 26 hours. The bomb is cooled to room temperature and opened. The crude solution is concentrated and the residue partitioned between water (200 mL) and hexanes (200 mL). The excess phenol is extracted into the hexane layer. The aqueous layer is extracted with ethyl acetate (3x200 mL) and the combined organic layers are washed once with water, dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and concentrated. The residue is columned on silica gel using methanol/methylene chloride 1:20 (which has 2% triethylamine) as the eluent. As the column fractions are concentrated a colorless solid forms which is collected to give the title compound as a white solid.
- 5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-2'-O-[2(2-N,N-dimethylaminoethoxy)ethyl]-5-methyl uridine

To 0.5 g (1.3 mmol) of 2'-O-[2(2-N,N-dimethylaminoethoxy)ethyl]-5-methyl uridine in anhydrous pyridine (8 mL), triethylamine (0.36 mL) and dimethoxytrityl chloride (DMT-Cl, 0.87 g, 2 eq.) are added and stirred for 1 hour. The
5 reaction mixture is poured into water (200 mL) and extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (2x200 mL). The combined CH_2Cl_2 layers are washed with saturated NaHCO_3 solution, followed by saturated NaCl solution and dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate. Evaporation of the solvent followed by silica gel
10 chromatography using $\text{MeOH}:\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2:\text{Et}_3\text{N}$ (20:1, v/v, with 1% triethylamine) gives the title compound.

5'-O-Dimethoxytrityl-2'-O-[2(2-N,N-dimethylaminoethoxy)ethyl]-5-methyl uridine-3'-O-(cyanoethyl-N,N-diisopropyl)phosphoramidite
15

Diisopropylaminotetrazolide (0.6 g) and 2-cyanoethoxy-N,N-diisopropyl phosphoramidite (1.1 mL, 2 eq.) are added to a solution of 5'-O-dimethoxytrityl-2'-O-[2(2-N,N-dimethylaminoethoxy)ethyl]-5-methyluridine (2.17 g, 3 mmol)
20 dissolved in CH_2Cl_2 (20 mL) under an atmosphere of argon. The reaction mixture is stirred overnight and the solvent evaporated. The resulting residue is purified by silica gel flash column chromatography with ethyl acetate as the eluent to give the title compound.

25

Example 2

Oligonucleotide synthesis

Unsubstituted and substituted phosphodiester (P=O) oligonucleotides are synthesized on an automated DNA
30 synthesizer (Applied Biosystems model 380B) using standard phosphoramidite chemistry with oxidation by iodine.

Phosphorothioates (P=S) are synthesized as for the phosphodiester oligonucleotides except the standard oxidation
bottle was replaced by 0.2 M solution of 3H-1,2-benzodithiole-3-one 1,1-dioxide in acetonitrile for the
35 stepwise thiation of the phosphite linkages. The thiation

wait step was increased to 68 sec and was followed by the capping step. After cleavage from the CPG column and deblocking in concentrated ammonium hydroxide at 55°C (18 h), the oligonucleotides were purified by precipitating twice with 2.5 volumes of ethanol from a 0.5 M NaCl solution.

Phosphinate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 5,508,270, herein incorporated by reference.

Alkyl phosphonate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 4,469,863, herein incorporated by reference.

3'-Deoxy-3'-methylene phosphonate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patents 5,610,289 or 5,625,050, herein incorporated by reference.

Phosphoramidite oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent, 5,256,775 or U.S. Patent 5,366,878, herein incorporated by reference.

Alkylphosphonothioate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in published PCT applications PCT/US94/00902 and PCT/US93/06976 (published as WO 94/17093 and WO 94/02499, respectively), herein incorporated by reference.

3'-Deoxy-3'-amino phosphoramidate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 5,476,925, herein incorporated by reference.

Phosphotriester oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 5,023,243, herein incorporated by reference.

Borano phosphate oligonucleotides are prepared as described in U.S. Patents 5,130,302 and 5,177,198, both herein incorporated by reference.

Example 3

Oligonucleoside Synthesis

Methylenemethylimino linked oligonucleosides, also identified as MMI linked oligonucleosides, methylenedimethylhydrazo linked oligonucleosides, also identified as MDH linked oligonucleosides, and methylenecarbonylamino linked

oligonucleosides, also identified as amide-3 linked oligonucleosides, and methyleneaminocarbonyl linked oligonucleosides, also identified as amide-4 linked oligonucleosides, as well as mixed backbone compounds having, for instance, alternating MMI and P=O or P=S linkages are prepared as described in U.S. Patents 5,378,825, 5,386,023, 5,489,677, 5,602,240 and 5,610,289, all of which are herein incorporated by reference.

Formacetal and thioformacetal linked oligonucleosides are prepared as described in U.S. Patents 5,264,562 and 5,264,564, herein incorporated by reference.

Ethylene oxide linked oligonucleosides are prepared as described in U.S. Patent 5,223,618, herein incorporated by reference.

Example 4

PNA Synthesis

Peptide nucleic acids (PNAs) are prepared in accordance with any of the various procedures referred to in Peptide Nucleic Acids (PNA): Synthesis, Properties and Potential Applications, *Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry*, 1996, 4, 5-23. They may also be prepared in accordance with U.S. Patents 5,539,082, 5,700,922, and 5,719,262, herein incorporated by reference.

Example 5

Synthesis of Chimeric Oligonucleotides

Chimeric oligonucleotides, oligonucleosides or mixed oligonucleotides/oligonucleosides of the invention can be of several different types. These include a first type wherein the "gap" segment of linked nucleosides is positioned between 5' and 3' "wing" segments of linked nucleosides and a second "open end" type wherein the "gap" segment is located at either the 3' or the 5' terminus of the oligomeric compound. Oligonucleotides of the first type are also known in the art as "gapmers" or gapped oligonucleotides. Oligonucleotides of

the second type are also known in the art as "hemimers" or "wingmers".

[2'-O-Me]--[2'-deoxy]--[2'-O-Me] Chimeric

Phosphorothioate Oligonucleotides

- 5 Chimeric oligonucleotides having 2'-O-alkyl phosphorothioate and 2'-deoxy phosphorothioate oligonucleotide segments are synthesized using an Applied Biosystems automated DNA synthesizer Model 380B, as above. Oligonucleotides are synthesized using the automated
- 10 synthesizer and 2'-deoxy-5'-dimethoxytrityl-3'-O-phosphoramidite for the DNA portion and 5'-dimethoxytrityl-2'-O-methyl-3'-O-phosphoramidite for 5' and 3' wings. The standard synthesis cycle is modified by increasing the wait step after the delivery of tetrazole and base to 600 s
- 15 repeated four times for RNA and twice for 2'-O-methyl. The fully protected oligonucleotide is cleaved from the support and the phosphate group is deprotected in 3:1 ammonia/ethanol at room temperature overnight then lyophilized to dryness. Treatment in methanolic ammonia for 24 hrs at room
- 20 temperature is then done to deprotect all bases and sample was again lyophilized to dryness. The pellet is resuspended in 1M TBAF in THF for 24 hrs at room temperature to deprotect the 2' positions. The reaction is then quenched with 1M TEAA and the sample is then reduced to 1/2 volume by rotovac
- 25 before being desalted on a G25 size exclusion column. The oligo recovered is then analyzed spectrophotometrically for yield and for purity by capillary electrophoresis and by mass spectrometry.

- 30 **[2'-O-(2-Methoxyethyl)]--[2'-deoxy]--[2'-O-(Methoxyethyl)] Chimeric Phosphorothioate Oligonucleotides**

- [2'-O-(2-methoxyethyl)]--[2'-deoxy]--[2'-O-(methoxyethyl)] chimeric phosphorothioate oligonucleotides were
- 35 prepared as per the procedure above for the 2'-O-methyl chimeric oligonucleotide, with the substitution of 2'-O-

(methoxyethyl) amidites for the 2'-O-methyl amidites.

[2'-O-(2-Methoxyethyl)Phosphodiester]--[2'-deoxy
Phosphorothioate]--[2'-O-(2-Methoxyethyl)
Phosphodiester] Chimeric Oligonucleotides

5 [2'-O-(2-methoxyethyl phosphodiester)--[2'-deoxy phos-
phorothioate]--[2'-O-(methoxyethyl) phosphodiester] chimeric
oligonucleotides are prepared as per the above procedure for
the 2'-O-methyl chimeric oligonucleotide with the
10 substitution of 2'-O-(methoxyethyl) amidites for the 2'-O-
methyl amidites, oxidization with iodine to generate the
phosphodiester internucleotide linkages within the wing
portions of the chimeric structures and sulfurization
utilizing 3,4,5-benzodithiole-3-one 1,1 dioxide (Beaucage
15 Reagent) to generate the phosphorothioate internucleotide
linkages for the center gap.

Other chimeric oligonucleotides, chimeric oligonucleo-
sides and mixed chimeric oligonucleotides/oligonucleosides
are synthesized according to United States patent 5,623,065,
20 herein incorporated by reference.

Example 6

Oligonucleotide Isolation

After cleavage from the controlled pore glass column
25 (Applied Biosystems) and deblocking in concentrated ammonium
hydroxide at 55°C for 18 hours, the oligonucleotides or
oligonucleosides are purified by precipitation twice out of
0.5 M NaCl with 2.5 volumes ethanol. Synthesized
oligonucleotides were analyzed by polyacrylamide gel
30 electrophoresis on denaturing gels and judged to be at least
85% full length material. The relative amounts of
phosphorothioate and phosphodiester linkages obtained in
synthesis were periodically checked by ^{31}P nuclear magnetic
resonance spectroscopy, and for some studies oligonucleotides
35 were purified by HPLC, as described by Chiang et al., *J.*
Biol. Chem. 1991, 266, 18162-18171. Results obtained with

HPLC-purified material were similar to those obtained with non-HPLC purified material.

Example 7

5 Oligonucleotide Synthesis - 96 Well Plate Format

Oligonucleotides were synthesized via solid phase P(III) phosphoramidite chemistry on an automated synthesizer capable of assembling 96 sequences simultaneously in a standard 96 well format. Phosphodiester internucleotide linkages were
10 afforded by oxidation with aqueous iodine. Phosphorothioate internucleotide linkages were generated by sulfurization utilizing 3,4-dithiolane-2-one 1,1 dioxides (Beaucage Reagent) in anhydrous acetonitrile. Standard base-protected beta-cyanoethyl-diisopropyl phosphoramidites were purchased
15 from commercial vendors (e.g. PE-Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA, or Pharmacia, Piscataway, NJ). Non-standard nucleosides are synthesized as per known literature or patented methods. They are utilized as base protected beta-cyanoethyl-diisopropyl phosphoramidites.

Oligonucleotides were cleaved from support and deprotected with concentrated NH_4OH at elevated temperature (55-60°C) for 12-16 hours and the released product then dried in vacuo. The dried product was then re-suspended in sterile water to afford a master plate from which all analytical and
25 test plate samples are then diluted utilizing robotic pipettors.

Example 8

Oligonucleotide Analysis - 96 Well Plate Format

The concentration of oligonucleotide in each well was assessed by dilution of samples and UV absorption spectroscopy. The full-length integrity of the individual products was evaluated by capillary electrophoresis (CE) in either the 96 well format (Beckman P/ACE™ MDQ) or, for
35 individually prepared samples, on a commercial CE apparatus (e.g., Beckman P/ACE™ 5000, ABI 270). Base and backbone

composition was confirmed by mass analysis of the compounds utilizing electrospray-mass spectroscopy. All assay test plates were diluted from the master plate using single and multi-channel robotic pipettors. Plates were judged to be acceptable if at least 85% of the compounds on the plate were at least 85% full length.

Example 9

Cell culture and oligonucleotide treatment

The effect of antisense compounds on target nucleic acid expression can be tested in any of a variety of cell types provided that the target nucleic acid is present at measurable levels. This can be routinely determined using, for example, PCR or Northern blot analysis. The following 4 cell types are provided for illustrative purposes, but other cell types can be routinely used, provided that the target is expressed in the cell type chosen. This can be readily determined by methods routine in the art, for example Northern blot analysis, Ribonuclease protection assays, or RT-PCR.

T-24 cells:

The human transitional cell bladder carcinoma cell line T-24 was obtained from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) (Manassas, VA). T-24 cells were routinely cultured in complete McCoy's 5A basal media (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA) supplemented with 10% fetal calf serum ((Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA), penicillin 100 units per mL, and streptomycin 100 micrograms per mL (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA). Cells were routinely passaged by trypsinization and dilution when they reached 90% confluence. Cells were seeded into 96-well plates (Falcon-Primaria #3872) at a density of 7000 cells/well for use in RT-PCR analysis.

For Northern blotting or other analysis, cells may be seeded onto 100 mm or other standard tissue culture plates and treated similarly, using appropriate volumes of medium

and oligonucleotide.

A549 cells:

- 5 The human lung carcinoma cell line A549 was obtained from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) (Manassas, VA). A549 cells were routinely cultured in DMEM basal media (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA) supplemented with 10% fetal calf serum (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA), penicillin 100 units per mL, and streptomycin 100 micrograms per mL (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA). Cells were routinely passaged by trypsinization and dilution when they reached 90% confluence.

NHDF cells:

- 15 Human neonatal dermal fibroblast (NHDF) were obtained from the Clonetics Corporation (Walkersville, MD). NHDFs were routinely maintained in Fibroblast Growth Medium (Clonetics Corporation, Walkersville, MD) supplemented as recommended by the supplier. Cells were maintained for up to 20 10 passages as recommended by the supplier.

HEK cells:

- 25 Human embryonic keratinocytes (HEK) were obtained from the Clonetics Corporation (Walkersville, MD). HEKs were routinely maintained in Keratinocyte Growth Medium (Clonetics Corporation, Walkersville, MD) formulated as recommended by the supplier. Cells were routinely maintained for up to 10 passages as recommended by the supplier.

- 30 Treatment with antisense compounds:

- When cells reached 70% confluency, they were treated with oligonucleotide. For cells grown in 96-well plates, wells were washed once with 100 μ L OPTI-MEMTM-1 reduced-serum medium (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA) and then 35 treated with 130 μ L of OPTI-MEMTM-1 containing 3.75 μ g/mL LIPOFECTINTM (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA) and the

desired concentration of oligonucleotide. After 4-7 hours of treatment, the medium was replaced with fresh medium. Cells were harvested 16-24 hours after oligonucleotide treatment.

- The concentration of oligonucleotide used varies from
- 5 cell line to cell line. To determine the optimal oligonucleotide concentration for a particular cell line, the cells are treated with a positive control oligonucleotide at a range of concentrations. For human cells the positive control oligonucleotide is ISIS 13920, **TCCGTCATCGCTCCTCAGGG**,
10 SEQ ID NO: 1, a 2'-O-methoxyethyl gapmer (2'-O-methoxyethyls shown in bold) with a phosphorothioate backbone which is targeted to human H-ras. For mouse or rat cells the positive control oligonucleotide is ISIS 15770, **ATGCATTCTGCCCCCAAGGA**,
15 SEQ ID NO: 2, a 2'-O-methoxyethyl gapmer (2'-O-methoxyethyls shown in bold) with a phosphorothioate backbone which is targeted to both mouse and rat c-raf. The concentration of positive control oligonucleotide that results in 80% inhibition of c-Ha-ras (for ISIS 13920) or c-raf (for ISIS 15770) mRNA is then utilized as the screening concentration
20 for new oligonucleotides in subsequent experiments for that cell line. If 80% inhibition is not achieved, the lowest concentration of positive control oligonucleotide that results in 60% inhibition of H-ras or c-raf mRNA is then utilized as the oligonucleotide screening concentration
25 subsequent experiments for that cell line. If 60% inhibition is not achieved, that particular cell line is deemed as unsuitable for oligonucleotide transfection experiments.

Example 10

- 30 **Analysis of oligonucleotide inhibition of MHC class II transactivator expression**

- Antisense modulation of MHC class II transactivator expression can be assayed in a variety of ways known in the art. For example, MHC class II transactivator mRNA levels
35 can be quantitated by, e.g., Northern blot analysis, competitive polymerase chain reaction (PCR), or real-time PCR

(RT-PCR). Real-time quantitative PCR is presently preferred. RNA analysis can be performed on total cellular RNA or poly(A)+ mRNA. The preferred method of RNA analysis of the present invention is the use of total cellular RNA as described in other examples herein. Methods of RNA isolation are taught in, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 1, pp. 4.1.1-4.2.9 and 4.5.1-4.5.3, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1993. Northern blot analysis is routine in the art and is taught in, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 1, pp. 4.2.1-4.2.9, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996. Real-time quantitative (PCR) can be conveniently accomplished using the commercially available ABI PRISM™ 7700 Sequence Detection System, available from PE-Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA and used according to manufacturer's instructions.

Protein levels of MHC class II transactivator can be quantitated in a variety of ways well known in the art, such as immunoprecipitation, Western blot analysis (immunoblotting), ELISA or fluorescence-activated cell sorting (FACS). Antibodies directed to MHC class II transactivator can be identified and obtained from a variety of sources, such as the MSRS catalog of antibodies (Aerie Corporation, Birmingham, MI), or can be prepared via conventional antibody generation methods. Methods for preparation of polyclonal antisera are taught in, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 2, pp. 11.12.1-11.12.9, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997. Preparation of monoclonal antibodies is taught in, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 2, pp. 11.4.1-11.11.5, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997.

Immunoprecipitation methods are standard in the art and can be found at, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 2, pp. 10.16.1-10.16.11, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998. Western blot

(immunoblot) analysis is standard in the art and can be found at, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 2, pp. 10.8.1-10.8.21, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997. Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISA) are standard in the art and can be found at, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 2, pp. 11.2.1-11.2.22, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1991.

Example 11

10 Poly(A)+ mRNA isolation

Poly(A)+ mRNA was isolated according to Miura et al., *Clin. Chem.*, 1996, 42, 1758-1764. Other methods for poly(A)+ mRNA isolation are taught in, for example, Ausubel, F.M. et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Volume 1, pp. 4.5.1-4.5.3, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1993. Briefly, for cells grown on 96-well plates, growth medium was removed from the cells and each well was washed with 200 μ L cold PBS. 60 μ L lysis buffer (10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.6, 1 mM EDTA, 0.5 M NaCl, 0.5% NP-40, 20 mM vanadyl-ribonucleoside complex) was added to each well, the plate was gently agitated and then incubated at room temperature for five minutes. 55 μ L of lysate was transferred to Oligo d(T) coated 96-well plates (AGCT Inc., Irvine CA). Plates were incubated for 60 minutes at room temperature, washed 3 times with 200 μ L of wash buffer (10 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.6, 1 mM EDTA, 0.3 M NaCl). After the final wash, the plate was blotted on paper towels to remove excess wash buffer and then air-dried for 5 minutes. 60 μ L of elution buffer (5 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.6), preheated to 70°C was added to each well, the plate was incubated on a 90°C hot plate for 5 minutes, and the eluate was then transferred to a fresh 96-well plate.

Cells grown on 100 mm or other standard plates may be treated similarly, using appropriate volumes of all solutions.

Example 12**Total RNA Isolation**

Total RNA was isolated using an RNEASY 96™ kit and buffers purchased from Qiagen Inc. (Valencia, CA) following the manufacturer's recommended procedures. Briefly, for cells grown on 96-well plates, growth medium was removed from the cells and each well was washed with 200 µL cold PBS. 150 µL Buffer RLT was added to each well and the plate vigorously agitated for 20 seconds. 150 µL of 70% ethanol was then added to each well and the contents mixed by pipetting three times up and down. The samples were then transferred to the RNEASY 96™ well plate attached to a QIAVAC™ manifold fitted with a waste collection tray and attached to a vacuum source. Vacuum was applied for 1 minute. 500 µL of Buffer RW1 was added to each well of the RNEASY 96™ plate and incubated for 15 minutes and the vacuum was again applied for 1 minute. An additional 500 µL of Buffer RW1 was added to each well of the RNEASY 96™ plate and the vacuum was applied for 2 minutes. 1 mL of Buffer RPE was then added to each well of the RNEASY 96™ plate and the vacuum applied for a period of 90 seconds. The Buffer RPE wash was then repeated and the vacuum was applied for an additional 3 minutes. The plate was then removed from the QIAVAC™ manifold and blotted dry on paper towels. The plate was then re-attached to the QIAVAC™ manifold fitted with a collection tube rack containing 1.2 mL collection tubes. RNA was then eluted by pipetting 170 µL water into each well, incubating 1 minute, and then applying the vacuum for 3 minutes.

The repetitive pipetting and elution steps may be automated using a QIAGEN Bio-Robot 9604 (Qiagen, Inc., Valencia CA). Essentially, after lysing of the cells on the culture plate, the plate is transferred to the robot deck where the pipetting, DNase treatment and elution steps are

carried out.

Example 13

5 Real-time Quantitative PCR Analysis of MHC class II transactivator mRNA Levels

Quantitation of MHC class II transactivator mRNA levels was determined by real-time quantitative PCR using the ABI PRISM™ 7700 Sequence Detection System (PE-Applied Biosystems, 10 Foster City, CA) according to manufacturer's instructions. This is a closed-tube, non-gel-based, fluorescence detection system which allows high-throughput quantitation of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) products in real-time. As opposed to standard PCR, in which amplification products are 15 quantitated after the PCR is completed, products in real-time quantitative PCR are quantitated as they accumulate. This is accomplished by including in the PCR reaction an oligonucleotide probe that anneals specifically between the forward and reverse PCR primers, and contains two fluorescent dyes. A reporter dye (e.g., FAM, obtained from either Operon 20 Technologies Inc., Alameda, CA or Integrated DNA Technologies Inc., Coralville, IA) is attached to the 5' end of the probe and a quencher dye (e.g., TAMRA, obtained from either Operon Technologies Inc., Alameda, CA or Integrated DNA Technologies 25 Inc., Coralville, IA) is attached to the 3' end of the probe. When the probe and dyes are intact, reporter dye emission is quenched by the proximity of the 3' quencher dye. During amplification, annealing of the probe to the target sequence creates a substrate that can be cleaved by the 5'-exonuclease 30 activity of Taq polymerase. During the extension phase of the PCR amplification cycle, cleavage of the probe by Taq polymerase releases the reporter dye from the remainder of the probe (and hence from the quencher moiety) and a sequence-specific fluorescent signal is generated. With each 35 cycle, additional reporter dye molecules are cleaved from their respective probes, and the fluorescence intensity is

monitored at regular intervals by laser optics built into the ABI PRISM™ 7700 Sequence Detection System. In each assay, a series of parallel reactions containing serial dilutions of mRNA from untreated control samples generates a standard curve that is used to quantitate the percent inhibition after antisense oligonucleotide treatment of test samples.

Prior to quantitative PCR analysis, primer-probe sets specific to the target gene being measured are evaluated for their ability to be "multiplexed" with a GAPDH amplification reaction. In multiplexing, both the target gene and the internal standard gene GAPDH are amplified concurrently in a single sample. In this analysis, mRNA isolated from untreated cells is serially diluted. Each dilution is amplified in the presence of primer-probe sets specific for GAPDH only, target gene only ("single-plexing"), or both (multiplexing). Following PCR amplification, standard curves of GAPDH and target mRNA signal as a function of dilution are generated from both the single-plexed and multiplexed samples. If both the slope and correlation coefficient of the GAPDH and target signals generated from the multiplexed samples fall within 10% of their corresponding values generated from the single-plexed samples, the primer-probe set specific for that target is deemed multiplexable. Other methods of PCR are also known in the art.

PCR reagents were obtained from Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA. RT-PCR reactions were carried out by adding 20 µL PCR cocktail (2.5x PCR buffer (-MgCl₂), 6.6 mM MgCl₂, 375 µM each of dATP, dCTP, dGTP and dTTP, 375 nM each of forward primer and reverse primer, 125 nM of probe, 4 Units RNase inhibitor, 1.25 Units PLATINUM® Taq, 5 Units MuLV reverse transcriptase, and 2.5x ROX dye) to 96 well plates containing 30 µL total RNA solution. The RT reaction was carried out by incubation for 30 minutes at 48°C. Following a 10 minute incubation at 95°C to activate the PLATINUM® Taq, 40 cycles of a two-step PCR protocol were carried out: 95°C for 15 seconds

(denaturation) followed by 60°C for 1.5 minutes (annealing/extension).

Gene target quantities obtained by real time RT-PCR are normalized using either the expression level of GAPDH, a gene whose expression is constant, or by quantifying total RNA using RiboGreen™ (Molecular Probes, Inc. Eugene, OR). GAPDH expression is quantified by real time RT-PCR, by being run simultaneously with the target, multiplexing, or separately. Total RNA is quantified using RiboGreen™ RNA quantification reagent from Molecular Probes. Methods of RNA quantification by RiboGreen™ are taught in Jones, L.J., et al, Analytical Biochemistry, 1998, 265, 368-374.

In this assay, 170 µL of RiboGreen™ working reagent (RiboGreen™ reagent diluted 1:350 in 10mM Tris-HCl, 1 mM EDTA, pH 7.5) is pipetted into a 96-well plate containing 30 µL purified, cellular RNA. The plate is read in a CytoFluor 4000 (PE Applied Biosystems) with excitation at 480nm and emission at 520nm.

Probes and primers to human MHC class II transactivator were designed to hybridize to a human MHC class II transactivator sequence, using published sequence information (GenBank accession number NM_000246.1, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO:3). For human MHC class II transactivator the PCR primers were:

forward primer: AGCTCTACTCAGAACCCGACACA (SEQ ID NO: 4)
reverse primer: TGGGAGTCCTGGAAGACATACTG (SEQ ID NO: 5) and the PCR probe was: FAM-AGGGAGGCTTATGCCAATATCGCGG-TAMRA (SEQ ID NO: 6) where FAM (PE-Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA) is the fluorescent reporter dye) and TAMRA (PE-Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA) is the quencher dye. For human GAPDH the PCR primers were:
forward primer: GAAGGTGAAGGTCGGAGTC (SEQ ID NO:7)
reverse primer: GAAGATGGTGATGGGATTTC (SEQ ID NO:8) and the PCR probe was: 5' JOE-CAAGCTTCCCGTTCTCAGCC-TAMRA 3' (SEQ ID NO: 9) where JOE (PE-Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA) is the fluorescent reporter dye) and TAMRA (PE-Applied

Biosystems, Foster City, CA) is the quencher dye.

Example 14

5 Northern blot analysis of MHC class II transactivator mRNA levels

Eighteen hours after antisense treatment, cell monolayers were washed twice with cold PBS and lysed in 1 mL RNAZOL™ (TEL-TEST "B" Inc., Friendswood, TX). Total RNA was
10 prepared following manufacturer's recommended protocols. Twenty micrograms of total RNA was fractionated by electrophoresis through 1.2% agarose gels containing 1.1% formaldehyde using a MOPS buffer system (AMRESCO, Inc. Solon, OH). RNA was transferred from the gel to HYBOND™-N+ nylon
15 membranes (Amersham Pharmacia Biotech, Piscataway, NJ) by overnight capillary transfer using a Northern/Southern Transfer buffer system (TEL-TEST "B" Inc., Friendswood, TX). RNA transfer was confirmed by UV visualization. Membranes were fixed by UV cross-linking using a STRATALINKER™ UV
20 Crosslinker 2400 (Stratagene, Inc, La Jolla, CA) and then probed using QUICKHYB™ hybridization solution (Stratagene, La Jolla, CA) using manufacturer's recommendations for stringent conditions.

To detect human MHC class II transactivator, a human MHC
25 class II transactivator specific probe was prepared by PCR using the forward primer AGCTCTACTCAGAACCCGACACA (SEQ ID NO: 4) and the reverse primer TGGGAGTCCTGGAAGACATACTG (SEQ ID NO: 5). To normalize for variations in loading and transfer efficiency membranes were stripped and probed for human
30 glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) RNA (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA).

Hybridized membranes were visualized and quantitated using a PHOSPHORIMAGER™ and IMAGEQUANT™ Software V3.3 (Molecular Dynamics, Sunnyvale, CA). Data was normalized to
35 GAPDH levels in untreated controls.

Example 15

Antisense inhibition of human MHC class II transactivator expression by chimeric phosphorothioate oligonucleotides having 2'-MOE wings and a deoxy gap

5 In accordance with the present invention, a series of oligonucleotides were designed to target different regions of the human MHC class II transactivator RNA, using published sequences (GenBank accession number NM_000246.1, representing MHC class II transactivator main mRNA (MHC2TA), incorporated
10 herein as SEQ ID NO: 3; GenBank accession number AA287083.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II transactivator, the complement of which is incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 10; GenBank accession number AF000002.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II
15 transactivator, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 11; GenBank accession number AF000004.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II transactivator, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 12; GenBank accession number AF000005.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II transactivator, incorporated
20 herein as SEQ ID NO: 13; GenBank accession number AW505377.1, representing a variant of MHC class II transactivator herein designated MHC2TA-II, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 14; GenBank accession number U18288.1, representing a variant of MHC class II transactivator herein designated MHC2TA-III,
25 incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 15; GenBank accession number U31931.1, representing a variant of MHC class II transactivator herein designated MHC2TA-IV, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 16; GenBank accession number U67329.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II
30 transactivator, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 17; GenBank accession number U94773.1, representing a partial sequence of MHC class II transactivator, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 18; and GenBank accession number Y18958.1, representing a variant of MHC class II transactivator herein designated
35 MHC2TA-V, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 19). The oligonucleotides are shown in Table 1. "Target site"

indicates the first (5'-most) nucleotide number on the particular target sequence to which the oligonucleotide binds. All compounds in Table 1 are chimeric oligonucleotides ("gapmers") 20 nucleotides in length, composed of a central "gap" region consisting of ten 2'-deoxynucleotides, which is flanked on both sides (5' and 3' directions) by five-nucleotide "wings". The wings are composed of 2'-methoxyethyl (2'-MOE)nucleotides. The internucleoside (backbone) linkages are phosphorothioate (P=S) throughout the oligonucleotide. All cytidine residues are 5-methylcytidines. The compounds were analyzed for their effect on human MHC class II transactivator mRNA levels by quantitative real-time PCR as described in other examples herein. Data are averages from two experiments. If present, "N.D." indicates "no data".

Table 1

Inhibition of human MHC class II transactivator mRNA levels by chimeric phosphorothioate oligonucleotides having 2'-MOE wings and a deoxy gap

| ISIS # | REGION | TARGET SEQ ID NO | TARGET SITE | SEQUENCE | % INHIB | SEQ ID NO |
|--------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------|--------------|
| 192423 | 5'UTR | 3 | 1 | accagtcaccagttgggagg | 0 | 20 |
| 192424 | 5'UTR | 3 | 48 | aggatgccttcggatgccca | 18 | 21 |
| 192425 | 5'UTR | 3 | 101 | aggcagcagctcccggagtc | 22 | 22 |
| 192426 | Start Codon | 3 | 121 | attgtgtaggaatcccagcc | 16 | 23 |
| 192427 | Start Codon | 3 | 131 | caggcaacgcattgtgtagg | 1 | 24 |
| 192428 | Coding | 3 | 185 | acactgtgagctgccttggg | 10 | 25 |
| 192429 | Coding | 3 | 234 | taagaagctccaggtagcca | 33 | 26 |
| 192430 | Coding | 3 | 287 | caggtccatctggtcataga | 30 | 27 |
| 192431 | Coding | 3 | 292 | ccagccaggtccatctggtc | 20 | 28 |
| 192432 | Coding | 3 | 326 | gtcgggttctgagtagagct | 58 | 29 |
| 192433 | Coding | 3 | 352 | aactggtcgcagttgatggt | 66 | 30 |
| 192434 | Coding | 3 | 357 | tgctgaactggctgcagttg | 60 | 31 |
| 192435 | Coding | 3 | 376 | tccatgtcacacaacagcct | 61 | 32 |
| 192436 | Coding | 3 | 421 | agttccgcgatattgacata | 29 | 33 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------------------|----|------|-----------------------|----|----|
| 192437 | Coding | 3 | 464 | gctcagggccctccagctggg | 0 | 34 |
| 192438 | Coding | 3 | 469 | tccttgctcaggccctccag | 0 | 35 |
| 192439 | Coding | 3 | 701 | ctcctggttgaacagcgca | 36 | 36 |
| 192440 | Coding | 3 | 1148 | gcggtagaactgtccaccg | 40 | 37 |
| 192441 | Coding | 3 | 1744 | gtgcaacctcgaggacgtt | 37 | 38 |
| 192442 | Coding | 3 | 1984 | tctgagagctggcacactgc | 22 | 39 |
| 192443 | Coding | 3 | 2113 | caggccagcttggccagctc | 9 | 40 |
| 192444 | Coding | 3 | 2118 | gtccccaggccagcttggcc | 35 | 41 |
| 192445 | Coding | 3 | 2374 | tcacgccagttgtcataggg | 26 | 42 |
| 192446 | Coding | 3 | 2379 | cgccctccagccagttgtca | 34 | 43 |
| 192447 | Coding | 3 | 2763 | cacagctgagtcgccagagg | 43 | 44 |
| 192448 | Coding | 3 | 2768 | ggtgacacagctgagtcaca | 32 | 45 |
| 192449 | Coding | 3 | 2830 | tcgccatgctgccgcaggga | 42 | 46 |
| 192450 | Coding | 3 | 2869 | atggtgaacttctcctctgc | 25 | 47 |
| 192451 | Coding | 3 | 2882 | tttgaaggctcgatggtga | 35 | 48 |
| 192452 | Coding | 3 | 3177 | gggtttccaaggacttcagg | 20 | 49 |
| 192453 | Coding | 3 | 3286 | atgcagttattgtacaaagt | 22 | 50 |
| 192454 | Coding | 3 | 3340 | agggacaccatgtccggaa | 8 | 51 |
| 192455 | Coding | 3 | 3346 | acccggagggaacaccatgtc | 23 | 52 |
| 192456 | Coding | 3 | 3351 | ccatcaccgcggagggaacc | 17 | 53 |
| 192457 | Coding | 3 | 3381 | cggcagccgtgaacttgtgt | 29 | 54 |
| 192458 | Coding | 3 | 3496 | cgtgaatcctgttgttgcag | 14 | 55 |
| 192459 | Stop Codon | 3 | 3520 | agctgggatcatctcaggct | 12 | 56 |
| 192460 | 3'UTR | 3 | 3552 | gtgtcctcagagaacatgcc | 19 | 57 |
| 192461 | 3'UTR | 3 | 3579 | taccagttcaagggtccagc | 21 | 58 |
| 192462 | 3'UTR | 3 | 3721 | ggagccgggctgtgtctgt | 36 | 59 |
| 192463 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4217 | gagcaggggtggagaagtact | 26 | 60 |
| 192464 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4467 | ctgtgcttccagctctgttcc | 36 | 61 |
| 192465 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4554 | aacagggtatgaactcaaac | 30 | 62 |
| 192466 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4587 | agataaccagagcagtgagg | 18 | 63 |
| 192467 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4793 | agccaacagccagcattgcc | 23 | 64 |
| 192468 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4803 | tgaggccccagccaacagc | 14 | 65 |
| 192469 | 3'UTR | 3 | 4952 | tgtgtgacttctaaggctag | 27 | 66 |
| 192470 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5409 | gtgggctctggtgtgtgcac | 24 | 67 |
| 192471 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5425 | gaggacttgagccaaagtgg | 27 | 68 |
| 192472 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5434 | ctcagaaaaggagcattgag | 9 | 69 |
| 192473 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5583 | cgctaaaaaccagctcactc | 12 | 70 |
| 192474 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5596 | gggactccgtctccgctaaa | 9 | 71 |
| 192475 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5797 | cagccgggtctggattcctc | 27 | 72 |
| 192476 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5859 | taccctttgcagccagttcg | 54 | 73 |
| 192477 | 3'UTR | 3 | 5886 | aagctgaacctggatggcag | 23 | 74 |
| 192478 | 3'UTR | 3 | 6097 | tatcattaaacaaatcgttag | 8 | 75 |
| 192479 | 3'UTR | 3 | 6250 | aaaagagaaacttttgtgtt | 7 | 76 |
| 192480 | 3'UTR | 3 | 6443 | ctgtgtgacttcaggcagag | 25 | 77 |
| 192481 | Coding | 11 | 233 | ctcacctgagtcaggatggc | 6 | 78 |
| 192482 | Coding | 11 | 413 | aggagggccaaatccaggtc | 0 | 79 |
| 192483 | Exon: Exon Junction | 14 | 57 | gtgagctgcctgagtcagga | 29 | 80 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------|----|------|-----------------------|----|----|
| 192484 | 5'UTR | 18 | 48 | tttcatcccaagacattgga | 0 | 81 |
| 192485 | 5'UTR | 18 | 56 | cctgtcatTTTcatcccaag | 17 | 82 |
| 192486 | Stop Codon | 18 | 723 | cccggcctttttaccttggg | 12 | 83 |
| 192487 | 5'UTR | 17 | 98 | acaaaaatgatgaaggtggt | 7 | 84 |
| 192488 | 5'UTR | 17 | 547 | tcccagcagctgggattac | 4 | 85 |
| 192489 | 5'UTR | 17 | 886 | gttacctcctgtttttgcca | 3 | 86 |
| 192490 | Promoter | 12 | 13 | gggtctctgtttctctccaa | 0 | 87 |
| 192491 | Promoter | 12 | 231 | ccaagcacctactgtggcca | 9 | 88 |
| 192492 | Promoter | 19 | 20 | tgagctaactgagctattca | 0 | 89 |
| 192493 | Promoter | 19 | 32 | tggccctgagatgagctaa | 5 | 90 |
| 192494 | Promoter | 13 | 54 | cttagatcagtgactctgaa | 8 | 91 |
| 192495 | Promoter | 13 | 157 | ttgggcttgtggttgctca | 10 | 92 |
| 192496 | Coding | 15 | 590 | gagaaaggcactggcttcca | 20 | 93 |
| 192497 | 3'UTR | 15 | 3088 | ggagtgtccctgaaggattg | 26 | 94 |
| 192498 | 3'UTR | 15 | 3183 | caatcccttggcgattaaagc | 19 | 95 |
| 192499 | Coding | 16 | 997 | acttctcgtccaggccattt | 48 | 96 |
| 192500 | 3'UTR | 10 | 142 | gcttgcttaacctctctgag | 27 | 97 |

As shown in Table 1, SEQ ID NOS 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 38, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 59, 61, 62, 73 and 96 demonstrated at least 30% inhibition of human MHC class II transactivator expression in this assay and are therefore preferred. The target sites to which these preferred sequences are complementary are herein referred to as "active sites" and are therefore preferred sites for targeting by compounds of the present invention.

Example 16

Western blot analysis of MHC class II transactivator protein levels

Western blot analysis (immunoblot analysis) is carried out using standard methods. Cells are harvested 16-20 h after oligonucleotide treatment, washed once with PBS, suspended in Laemmli buffer (100 ul/well), boiled for 5 minutes and loaded on a 16% SDS-PAGE gel. Gels are run for 1.5 hours at 150 V, and transferred to membrane for western blotting. Appropriate primary antibody directed to MHC class II transactivator is used, with a radiolabelled or

fluorescently labeled secondary antibody directed against the primary antibody species. Bands are visualized using a PHOSPHORIMAGER™ (Molecular Dynamics, Sunnyvale CA).

5

Example 17**Targeting of individual oligonucleotides to specific variants of MHC class II transactivator**

It is advantageous to selectively inhibit the expression of one or more variants of MHC class II transactivator. Consequently, in one embodiment of the present invention are oligonucleotides that selectively target, hybridize to, and specifically inhibit one or more, but fewer than all of the variants of MHC class II transactivator. A summary of the target sites of the variants is shown in Table 2 and includes Genbank accession number NM_00246.1 representing MHC2TA, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 3; Genbank accession number AW505377.1 representing MHC2TA-II, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 14; Genbank accession number U18288.1 representing MHC2TA-III, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 15; Genbank accession number U31931.1, representing MHC2TA-IV, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 16; Genbank accession number Y18958.1, representing MHC2TA-V, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 19; and Genbank accession number X74301.1, representing a sixth variant of MHC class II transactivator herein designated MHC2TA-VI, incorporated herein as SEQ ID NO: 98.

Table 2

Targeting of individual oligonucleotides to specific variants of MHC class II transactivator

| ISIS # | OLIGO SEQ ID NO. | TARGET SITE | VARIANT | VARIANT SEQ ID NO. |
|--------|------------------|-------------|------------|--------------------|
| 192423 | 20 | 1 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192424 | 21 | 48 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192424 | 21 | 25 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----|-----|------------|----|
| 192424 | 21 | 25 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192425 | 22 | 101 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192425 | 22 | 78 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192425 | 22 | 78 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192426 | 23 | 121 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192426 | 23 | 98 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192426 | 23 | 98 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192427 | 24 | 131 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192427 | 24 | 108 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192427 | 24 | 108 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192428 | 25 | 185 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192428 | 25 | 162 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192428 | 25 | 47 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192428 | 25 | 162 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192429 | 26 | 234 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192429 | 26 | 111 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192429 | 26 | 211 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192429 | 26 | 96 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192429 | 26 | 211 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192430 | 27 | 287 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192430 | 27 | 164 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192430 | 27 | 264 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192430 | 27 | 149 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192430 | 27 | 264 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192431 | 28 | 292 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192431 | 28 | 169 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192431 | 28 | 269 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192431 | 28 | 154 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192431 | 28 | 269 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192432 | 29 | 326 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192432 | 29 | 203 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192432 | 29 | 303 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192432 | 29 | 188 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192432 | 29 | 303 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192433 | 30 | 352 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192433 | 30 | 229 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192433 | 30 | 329 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192433 | 30 | 214 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192433 | 30 | 329 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192434 | 31 | 357 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192434 | 31 | 234 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192434 | 31 | 334 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192434 | 31 | 219 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192434 | 31 | 334 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192435 | 32 | 376 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192435 | 32 | 253 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192435 | 32 | 353 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192435 | 32 | 238 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192435 | 32 | 353 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192436 | 33 | 421 | MHC2TA | 3 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----|------|------------|----|
| 192436 | 33 | 298 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192436 | 33 | 398 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192436 | 33 | 283 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192436 | 33 | 398 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192437 | 34 | 464 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192437 | 34 | 341 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192437 | 34 | 441 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192437 | 34 | 326 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192437 | 34 | 441 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192438 | 35 | 469 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192438 | 35 | 346 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192438 | 35 | 446 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192438 | 35 | 331 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192438 | 35 | 446 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192439 | 36 | 701 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192439 | 36 | 563 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
| 192439 | 36 | 678 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192440 | 37 | 1148 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192440 | 37 | 981 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192440 | 37 | 1125 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192441 | 38 | 1744 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192441 | 38 | 1577 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192441 | 38 | 1721 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192442 | 39 | 1984 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192442 | 39 | 1817 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192442 | 39 | 1961 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192443 | 40 | 2113 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192443 | 40 | 1946 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192443 | 40 | 2090 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192444 | 41 | 2118 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192444 | 41 | 1951 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192444 | 41 | 2095 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192445 | 42 | 2374 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192445 | 42 | 2207 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192445 | 42 | 2351 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192446 | 43 | 2379 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192446 | 43 | 2212 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192446 | 43 | 2356 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192447 | 44 | 2763 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192447 | 44 | 2596 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192447 | 44 | 2740 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192448 | 45 | 2768 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192448 | 45 | 2601 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192448 | 45 | 2745 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192449 | 46 | 2830 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192449 | 46 | 2807 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192450 | 47 | 2869 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192450 | 47 | 2846 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192451 | 48 | 2882 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192451 | 48 | 2859 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |

| | | | | |
|--------|----|------|------------|----|
| 192452 | 49 | 3177 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192452 | 49 | 3154 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192453 | 50 | 3286 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192453 | 50 | 3263 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192454 | 51 | 3340 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192454 | 51 | 3317 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192455 | 52 | 3346 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192455 | 52 | 3323 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192456 | 53 | 3351 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192456 | 53 | 3328 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192457 | 54 | 3381 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192457 | 54 | 3358 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192458 | 55 | 3496 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192458 | 55 | 3473 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192459 | 56 | 3520 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192459 | 56 | 3497 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192460 | 57 | 3552 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192460 | 57 | 3529 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192461 | 58 | 3579 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192461 | 58 | 3556 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192462 | 59 | 3721 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192462 | 59 | 3699 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192463 | 60 | 4217 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192463 | 60 | 4196 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192464 | 61 | 4467 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192464 | 61 | 4448 | MHC2TA-VI | 98 |
| 192465 | 62 | 4554 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192466 | 63 | 4587 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192467 | 64 | 4793 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192468 | 65 | 4803 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192469 | 66 | 4952 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192470 | 67 | 5409 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192471 | 68 | 5425 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192472 | 69 | 5434 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192473 | 70 | 5583 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192474 | 71 | 5596 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192475 | 72 | 5797 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192476 | 73 | 5859 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192477 | 74 | 5886 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192478 | 75 | 6097 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192479 | 76 | 6250 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192480 | 77 | 6443 | MHC2TA | 3 |
| 192483 | 80 | 57 | MHC2TA-II | 14 |
| 192490 | 87 | 95 | MHC2TA-V | 19 |
| 192491 | 88 | 313 | MHC2TA-V | 19 |
| 192492 | 89 | 20 | MHC2TA-V | 19 |
| 192493 | 90 | 32 | MHC2TA-V | 19 |
| 192496 | 93 | 590 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192497 | 94 | 3088 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |
| 192498 | 95 | 3183 | MHC2TA-III | 15 |

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|--------|----|-----|-----------|----|
| 192499 | 96 | 997 | MHC2TA-IV | 16 |
|--------|----|-----|-----------|----|

192499 96 997 MHC2TA-IV 16